



## Lib Dems revolt after election day demolition

By Marijke Cox

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SHEPWAY'S Lib Dems have called for their party to break out of the Coalition after losing all their seats in a Tory landslide at Thursday's local elections.

The Conservatives secured 44 of the 46 seats – gaining seven on the previous political make-up of Shepway District Council – with independents People First winning two.

All six Lib Dem seats were lost and Labour walked away with nothing.

Former Shepway councillor for the Folkestone Cheriton ward, Peter Carroll, who chose not to stand in the election, said the poor result was due to national problems.

"The Coalition is not working for the Lib Dems. People think we're part of the Tories, which we're not," he said.

"I think the Shepway results are a tragedy. Some fantastic local councillors have been lost through no fault of their own.

"National problems have led to this electoral annihilation – the party has to get out of the Coalition."

Mr Carroll, who successfully campaigned for equal settlement rights for Gurkhas alongside actress Joanna Lumley, said he chose not to contest his seat.

"I couldn't look voters in the eyes – my party is being taken over. It's seen to be part of a Government I don't agree with."

He said: "Take the NHS reforms. I don't know any Lib Dem in the grassroots who want to support Andrew Lansley.

"The leadership will get disconnected from grassroots."

Hythe West ward Lib Dem hopeful and town councillor, Sam Matthews, wrote on his Twitter page: "I'm now a former Lib Dem councillor in Kent. Clegg goes or I go."

Labour Party candidates were also left disheartened after securing not one seat on the council.

Candidate for the Folkestone Foord ward Donald Worsley said he was disappointed with the result but determined the party would fight back.

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## Stephen Fry's fun day out at wildlife park

Full story – see inside

### MEETING

## Village fury at proposals

FURIOUS residents expressed their anger at four proposals which threaten to transform their "besieged village" at a public meeting last night. Residents in Sellindge convened at a public meeting in the local school hall to express their concerns at a volley of developments.

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### SAILING

## Brave Luke hits the waves

A CANCER survivor has taken part in an inspirational sailing trip through a charity run by record-breaking sailor Ellen MacArthur. Luke Moran, 24, from Folkestone, had suffered from Hodgkins Lymphoma in 2004. He ended the four-day trip with a qualification.

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### FIRE

## Blaze fears in dry spell

FIRE chiefs have issued a warning to take care in the countryside during the dry weather, amid fears the county could follow in the footsteps of a host of other areas in the UK, devastated by out-of-control blazes. It is urging extra caution while walking or driving.

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EDUCATION

# Government needs to 'listen to the experts'

By Steve Knight

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TEACHERS' unions are lashing out against the Government as a year of controversial education policies comes to an end.

The profession has been hit by a number of unpopular decisions since the Coalition was formed last May, including the axing of the Building Schools for the Future project and changes to teachers' pension schemes.

Members of the NASUWT union gave the Government a vote of no confidence at their annual conference last month, with general secretary Chris Keates accusing Education Secretary Michael Gove of "educational vandalism" in a report card on his time in office.

And teachers in Kent are none too impressed either.

Maidstone resident Julia Harris, the NASUWT national executive member for Kent and Medway, said: "The Government is making all these decisions without listening to the experts, and whereas schools used to be accountable to their local authorities, everything now seems to go straight back to Michael Gove."

"The most damaging decision so far has to be the scrapping of the Building Schools for the Future project, as that was a big setback for so many schools throughout the county."

Last month KoS revealed how members of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) were considering going on strike over changes to their pension schemes.

Government ministers want teachers to pay 50 per cent more into their sav-



**BAD REPORT:** Michael Gove's policies are not popular with teachers

ings than they do at present, despite a change in how their pensions are calculated which could lead to a loss in value of more than £60,000 over the course of their careers.

Mrs Harris admitted that NASUWT members could also end up taking industrial action against the changes.

She said: "To have money taken

away that has already been promised to us is obviously a big problem, and we are currently in negotiations over the issue.

"We can hope the Government will move on some aspects, but if not then there will be some militancy. Given what's happened in the past, I don't expect them to listen to us."

Having already agreed to hold a ballot for strike action over the pensions issue, the NUT has now turned its attentions to the Government's plans to rapidly expand the number of academies in England over the next few years.

Ministers want the independently-run but state-funded schools to become the norm by the end of this Parliament, but the union says the rapid growth is part of a drive towards privatisation.

NUT Kent spokesman John Walder said: "A lot of teachers don't agree with the academy expansion but they're being ignored, and that's part of the problem - there's been no real consultation."

"I think the attitudes of some teachers will change as time goes on, as academies now have a lot more power to change teachers' pay, terms and conditions, and prospects of employment."

"The people who are driving the expansion - Gove and his friends - are against local government and are eager to remove education from its control, despite saying they want to return power to the localities."

"This will almost certainly lead to private companies spouting up and providing an education service without anyone really knowing what standards are expected of them."

IMMIGRATION

## Border controls tightened amid fears that Britain about to face new wave of migrants

BORDER controls are being stepped up to stop North African migrants trying to smuggle themselves into Britain on high-speed Eurostar trains.

Hundreds of Tunisian and Libyan migrants have set up camp near the Gare du Nord station in Paris where Eurostar trains stop to Kent and London.

There are fears the migrants, who are part of a wave of immigration caused by civil unrest in Arab countries, will pay people-smugglers to get them into the country.

It comes as France pushes for tighter border controls with President Nicolas Sarkozy and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi calling for the Schengen Treaty - which allows passport-free movement between 25 EU countries - to be revised.

The European Commission is currently preparing to tighten up border-free travel to tackle large migration

flows. Thousands of North African migrants have recently descended on Italy, with Berlusconi begging his French counterpart to share the burden. Hundreds of migrants are now camped in Paris with hopes of travelling to Britain, after President Sarkozy clamped down on migrants making it harder for them to get work.

Immigration minister and Ashford MP Damian Green said there were strict British immigration controls in place and additional security checks on transport leaving France for the UK. "We are maintaining this strong regime. Britain has offered Italy practical assistance to help maintain border controls and asylum processes."

"Those seeking international protection are expected to claim asylum in the first safe country they enter," he said.

A spokesman from the UK Border

Agency said the situation was being monitored carefully.

"Priority in North Africa is providing humanitarian assistance in the region," he said. "We are monitoring the situation and working with EU countries to build border and immigration control capability on both sides of the Mediterranean to avoid unwarranted migration flows into the EU."

Sixty migrants were arrested in France amid the clamp down of immigration controls in France. Reports stated they had set up camp in Paris with a view to enter England where they believe there is more chance of getting help.

But a spokesman for Eurotunnel said the company was at a very high level of alert, with state-of-the-art security systems and contact with British and French frontier authorities to ensure they were aware of any current threats.

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# 'Besieged' village furious over snub by County Hall

By Mathew Beech

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FURIOUS residents expressed their anger at four proposals which threaten to transform their "besieged village" at a public meeting last night.

Residents in Sellindge convened at a public meeting in the local school hall to express their concerns at a volley of developments.

The main issues on the agenda were the planned waste treatment plant for the Otterpool Lane quarry – which Kent County Council recently gave the green light to – a proposed lorry park to relieve the pressures on the M20 during Operation Stack, a potential wind farm in the village, and Shepway District Council's housing development plan, which could see additional houses built in and around the settlement, situated midway between Ashford and Hythe.

However, tempers were inflamed after KCC informed the meeting they were unable to send a representative to attend.

Chairman of the Sellindge and District Residents' Association – which organised the meeting – Ronald Lello, said: "There are four things our be-



**PROTEST:** Sellindge villagers say their views on developments in and around the village are being ignored by KCC

sieged village is having to deal with and that is a huge amount for one village to have to cope with.

"People have had an opportunity to say what they think about this process. There is a lot of anger in the village and it is affecting people in two ways.

"They are either coming out of the democratic process because they are becoming cynical and think it is all fixed, or they want to get stuck in and give it a go.

"It is extraordinary that no one from KCC has come down. They were all apparently engaged.

"KCC should be held in contempt for neglect because they are due to represent and look after all of their parishes."

A KCC spokesman said: "We are interested in the residents' views and we are aware of what their views are regarding the quarry.

"At the public consultation, they were in the chamber and a repre-

sentative was able to speak there and we have held meetings prior to the decision being made.

"We take the views of the residents very seriously and would like to hear what they have to say."

Following the meeting, the residents' association is now planning out what their next move could be.

Mr Lello added: "It is very difficult to get any decisions overturned, but there are a number of avenues we can go down."

## LOCAL ELECTIONS

### Lib Dems left reeling after polls bashing

Continued from front

"We always fight another day – this just gives us steely determination to do so," he said. "Nationally, the party needs to address issues that are relevant to the south, such as immigration and housing – Shepway is the fifth worst housing authority in the country.

"Unfortunately, the Labour Party did not address the issue in time.

"As a party we will be meeting very shortly to review our strategy. Together we will campaign and have spontaneous protests against the relevant issues."

He added: "I intend to carry on the fight. I've turned 60 but I've got another 10 years or maybe more depending on health."

But while Labour and Lib Dem members were left reeling from their defeat, Conservatives were celebrating a major landslide.

Tory council leader Robert Bliss said: "It was a very good result. I wasn't nervous – we thought we would hold our own.

"We have been focusing on local issues. We've not made any cuts; there is no increase in council tax; we're not making any redundancies; we're putting money into small businesses – in actual fact we've been preparing for problems with the economy for the past few years.

"Nationally things do have an affect, but I'm really pleased with the result."

## CANCER CHARITY

# Cancer survivor sailing once again thanks to charity's aid

A CANCER survivor has taken part in an inspirational sailing trip through a charity run by record-breaking sailor Ellen MacArthur.

Luke Moran, from Folkestone, was given the chance to train on the water as part of a professional volunteer team with the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust.

The 24-year-old had previously sailed with the charity, which was set up to inspire recovery from cancer and leukaemia through sailing, while recovering from Hodgkins Lymphoma in 2004.

But this time brave Mr Moran sailed as part of a professional volunteers week to work towards a qualification.

"Even though it was a more constructive trip than the four-day trip I had previously been on, as we were working towards a qualification, it was still loads of fun," he said.

"The trust feels more like a community than a charity and being able to return as a volunteer makes me feel even more involved in that."

The five-day journey started at Cowes on the Isle of Wight and the young people involved were put to the test by navigating along the south coast, including a day of independent sailing



**SAILING QUALIFICATION:** Luke Moran

where the four-strong fleet split up and chose their own routes.

Mr Moran was onboard with 14 other youngsters who had previously sailed with the trust and had all recovered from various forms of cancer and leukaemia.

The participants gained their professional Competent Crew qualification from the Royal Yachting Association and were given valuable advice on taking steps to becoming a responsible volunteer.

Mr Moran said he hoped to return to the trust to help other young people in recovery from serious illnesses.

Chief executive of the charity, Frank Fletcher, said: "Young people who have recovered from cancer very rarely meet other young people in the same position.

"Most never get to meet an adult who went through cancer as a young person.

"The positive effect on the young people who have just finished treatment, being able to spend time with an adult who really understands what they've been through, is hugely beneficial."

The trust was established in 2003 by record-breaking sailor Ellen MacArthur who, in 2000, went on a charity trip, organised by French organisation A Chacun son Cap, which pushed her to create something similar in the UK.

■ For more information about the trust go to [www.ellenmacarthurtrust.org](http://www.ellenmacarthurtrust.org)

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## INFRASTRUCTURE

# Boris Island a threat to UK growth, says airport boss

By Marijke Cox

Marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

THE head of Manston airport has backed comments made by a leading budget airline boss that to build a Thames estuary hub would be "absolutely nuts".

Kent International Airport (Manston) chief Charles Buchanan said the focus should be on existing infrastructure in the South East, rather than something "new and speculative".

It follows comments made by Ryanair boss Michael O'Leary about Tory London Mayor Boris Johnson's hopes for a £40 billion floating airport hub – nicknamed Boris Island – in the Thames estuary off the north Kent coast near Medway.

The Government recently ruled out new runways at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, but is also openly opposed to a hub airport in the Thames.

Mr O'Leary told the BBC that Boris Island would not make economic sense, adding: "I think it's absolutely nuts, there's no requirement for any new hub airport."

"London has five airports – you've got Luton, Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and London City. What we do need urgently in the South East is more runways at those airports."

"I would tear up the agreement at Gatwick and at Heathrow and I would build a second runway at Gatwick and a third runway at Heathrow. This is the only way forward."

"Britain is losing out to Madrid, to Paris and to Frankfurt, who are pushing forward more runways at their existing hub airports."

"Please, please don't waste billions and billions of pounds building another white elephant in the Romney Marshes or wherever it is."

Last year, Prime Minister David Cameron said the Government had no plans for an estuary airport, after Gillingham and Rainham MP Rehman Chishti called for reassurance.

Medway Council and Kent County Council are also opposed to what they have branded a "pie-in-the-sky" idea.

Cllr Alan Jarrett, deputy leader of Conservative-run Medway Council, said the scheme was "unnecessary, unaffordable and unworkable".



**NUTS:** Mayor of London Boris Johnson's plan for an airport hub in the Thames estuary is unworkable, says Charles Buchanan, of Kent International Airport at Manston

Manston's Mr Buchanan said more should be made of existing infrastructure, particularly at the east Kent airport, which has room for expansion and the capacity to run more flights.

"With a new airport we're talking about 20 or 30 years away. Air travel demand is going to grow substantially in that time," he said.

"The other main London airports are full, so where is the demand going to go?"

"The UK will lose economic prevalence waiting for something to be built."

Mr Buchanan hinted that Manston was being overlooked by Government.

"One of the key things that should be looked at is the expansion of regional airports," he said.

"Manston is key; increasing its use will reduce the pressure on the country's major airports."

He added: "There is an opportunity here for us to develop. This is a regular theme I raise."

## FIRE RISK

## Blazes caused by hot snap brings fire warning for Kent countryside

FIRE chiefs have issued a warning to take care in the countryside during the dry weather, amid fears Kent could follow in the footsteps of a host of areas across the UK, devastated by out-of-control blazes.

Warm weather and dry conditions have seen hundreds of firefighters tackle fires in Lancashire, Berkshire, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, hindered by strong winds fanning the flames.

The fires have caused huge damage to the countryside and the wildlife which relies on it.

Now Kent Fire and Rescue

Service (KFRS) is urging people to protect the countryside by being extra careful not to start or cause fires through carelessness.

KFRS community safety risk reduction manager, Charlie Smith, said: "During warmer weather, grass and crop fires can be a serious problem for our service, and tie up a huge amount of our valuable fire-fighting resources."

"We want to encourage people to take care and think about what they're doing. For example, drivers should refrain from discarding cigarettes through

car windows while driving along, as this can easily set fire to grass verges, diverting fire crews from life-threatening emergencies to attend to such incidents.

"I would also remind people that throwing cigarettes or any other rubbish from vehicles is regarded as littering and subject to at least a fine."

He added: "Another major problem for us is young people deliberately setting fires. We urge parents to warn them of the dangers of fire, as well as keeping matches and lighters out of their reach."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### ➔ Woman killed by bus

A PEDESTRIAN died in hospital five days after being hit by a bus in Maidstone.

Louise Friday, 44, was walking along London Road near the junction with Queens Road when she was struck by a yellow single-decker, at about 2pm last Saturday (April 30).

Police say there would have been many people around at the time and are urging witnesses of the accident or the events leading up to it to come forward. Call 01622 798538.

### ➔ Police tackle gay men

KENT'S only gay-friendly football team Bexley Invicta will take on Bexleyheath Police FC in a friendly next weekend.

Both sides will be competing for the Aslie Pitter Trophy, named in honour of the man awarded an MBE for tackling homophobia through sport.

The game kicks off at 3pm at Welling United's home ground of Park View Road. A number of local dignitaries will also be in attendance.

### ➔ Students' boat race

THE fifth annual Universities at Medway Boat Race will be held next Saturday, May 14.

The event, which has been organised by the Universities at Medway Students Association, will be contested by young people from the universities of Kent, Greenwich, and Canterbury Christ Church. The race on the River Medway starts at Cuxton at 10am and finishes at Rochester Esplanade.

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WAR ON TERROR

# Al Qaeda will come back stronger after Bin Laden, says 7/7 survivor

**Steve Knight** speaks with a Kent victim of the 2005 London bombings as the world reacts to the death of the world's most dangerous man



**ATROCITIES:** The London bombings of July 2007

A SURVIVOR of the 7/7 London bombings says she does not think Al Qaeda has been weakened by the death of its leader.

Beverli Rhodes, from Kennington in Ashford, was one of hundreds caught up in the atrocities of six years ago, when 52 people died and 700 were injured after three tube trains and a bus were blown up by Islamic extremists inspired by Osama Bin Laden.

The 49-year-old underwent major surgery to rebuild her face and was forced to leave her job – which was ironically as a counter-terrorism expert for the security firm Capita Symonds – after struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Mrs Rhodes told KoS that while many of her fellow survivors welcomed Bin Laden's death as a major blow to Al Qaeda, she doubted it would have much of an impact.

She said: "I think there will be some comfort and the general consensus among the few I have



**THREAT REMAINS:** 7/7 survivor Beverli Rhodes says Osama Bin Laden had gone into isolation and that he was more a spiritual leader than master of al Qaeda operations these days



spoken to is that they feel safer and have gained a degree of closure.

"But as somebody who used to work in counter-terrorism, I do not feel the danger is over. You may be able to cut the head off the snake, but this snake has at least five or six heads and it would be silly to think things will get better just because Bin Laden is dead.

"I don't think it will have any effect on Al Qaeda. If it had been years ago when he was the master terrorist planning all these attacks then it might have made a difference, but he had gone into isolation and was pretty much retired.

"It's good that he has gone but we would probably have been better off getting one or more of his lieutenants instead, as they are

the people who are in control of things now."

Mrs Rhodes was caught up in the attacks of July 7, 2005, while travelling to work on the tube train blown up near King's Cross station.

She was about to get off the train when she was thrown forward into a pole and knocked unconscious as the bomb went off.

As well as suffering severe facial injuries, the grandmother-of-two also suffered injuries to her chest and leg.

"If anything the terrorists will come back stronger, and particularly against America, for what has happened," she said. "In recent years Bin Laden had become more of a spiritual leader, and it become more about serving him than serving Al Qaeda."

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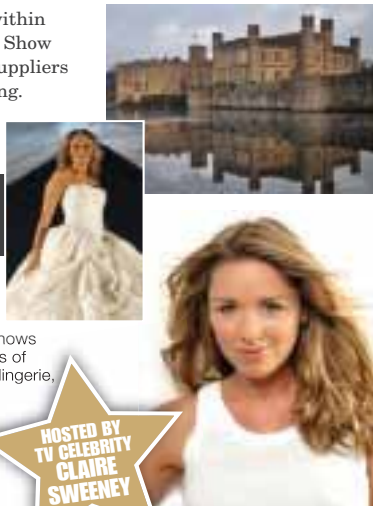
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## MP urges US forces to make Afghanistan peace a priority

**By Steve Knight**

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AMERICAN troops should refocus their attentions in Afghanistan now that Osama Bin Laden is dead, says Gulf War veteran and Kent MP Adam Holloway.

The Conservative representative for Gravesend has visited the war-torn country at his own expense every year since being elected in 2005, and has repeatedly called for a more intelligence-led approach to ending the conflict that would involve striking deals with reconcilable Taliban leaders.

Mr Holloway said it was important to remember the Taliban and Al Qaeda are not one and the same, and that the death of Bin Laden will only be a positive in Afghanistan if it means the American troops focus on making peace with those members of the Taliban who

have no terrorist connections.

He said: "Since 2005 I've said the vast majority of people we call the Taliban are just normal local people who have no connection with Al Qaeda.

"I hope now Bin Laden is dead it will make it easier for the Americans to appreciate this, because only a very small minority of the people they're fighting against are old crazies.

"Most of the Taliban are only fighting back because they don't like their country being occupied by foreign troops and because they are unhappy with having a corrupt government.

"We should be cutting off that section of the insurgency and making peace with it."

Mr Holloway is a former Grenadier Guards officer who fought in the first Gulf War and was an ITN reporter at the start of the second. He has also worked as an investigative journalist for World in Action, Panorama

and the Sunday Times.

In 2007, five men were sentenced to life after being found guilty of planning to bomb Bluewater – one of the largest shopping centres in Europe.

Members of the public alerted police when they discovered a large amount of ammonium nitrate was being kept at a storage unit in west London.

Had they not, the lives of thousands of Kent shoppers could have been lost.

Just hours after Bin Laden's death in the early hours of Monday, the Home Office website revealed that the current threat level from international terrorism is severe, meaning a terrorist attack is highly likely.

Mr Holloway said: "There is still a danger of radicalisation among impressionable idiots in our country. That threat remains despite Bin Laden's death, so we have to continue to be very, very careful."

# Operation's success a 'turning point' for Obama's presidency

By Steve Knight

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THE capture and killing of Osama Bin Laden should do wonders for the popularity of President Barack Obama, says an American Democrat living in Kent.

Sandi Carney, 61, from Sevenoaks, is a member of the Democrats Abroad group of expats which has members throughout the county and across the rest of the UK.

She was one of millions who trumpeted Obama's rise to the top of politics in November 2008, but his time in office has been fraught with problems including the economic downturn, the Gulf of Mexico oil spill disaster and even question marks over his own birth certificate.

But all that changed in the early hours of Monday when the President announced that Bin Laden had been shot dead in Pakistan.

Mrs Carney said: "I think this

is absolutely a turning point for Obama, and as far as the popular vote goes I think this will really make a big difference.

"There's a great sense of pride that finally there was a US commando raid that went right. Being old enough to remember a couple that went wrong in Iran and other places, I think our special forces have always tended to blunder into things in the past.

"But apparently the first thing they did when they landed in Pakistan was to speak in Pashto to some of the locals, which shows they obviously went to language school.

"That shows a change in the American response to the world, and they appear to have taken a leaf out of the British SAS approach.

"Whereas George W Bush was a bit gung-ho and crazy in attacking Iraq and Afghanistan after 9/11, Obama has taken a more long-term approach and I'm very

proud we have a President with the brains and foresight to oversee what must have been a very difficult operation."

Mrs Carney is originally from Hawaii and went to university with President Obama's late mother, Ann Soetoro.

News of Bin Laden's death sparked huge celebrations across the United States, most notably in the cities of New York and Washington that fell victim to the terrorist atrocities of September 11, 2001.

"That day had an absolutely shocking impact on America, and it made people realise they were vulnerable to external attacks," said Mrs Carney.

"I personally wouldn't have joined the crowds of people in New York and Washington who gathered to chant 'USA, USA' after Bin Laden's death, but it was touching for me to see a new generation of people who are proud of their country."



**TIMELY BOOST:** President Obama's popularity will surge says Democrat living in Kent

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## EDUCATION

# Government needs to learn by 'listening to the experts'

By Steve Knight

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TEACHERS' unions are lashing out against the Government as a year of controversial education policies comes to an end.

The profession has been hit by a number of unpopular decisions since the Coalition was formed last May, including the axing of the Building Schools for the Future project and changes to teachers' pension schemes.

Members of the NASUWT union gave the Government a vote of no confidence at their annual conference last month, with general secretary Chris Keates accusing Education Secretary Michael Gove of "educational vandalism" in a report card on his time in office.

And teachers in Kent are none too impressed either.

Maidstone resident Julia Harris, the NASUWT national executive member for Kent and Medway, said: "The Government is making all these decisions without listening to the experts, and whereas schools used to be accountable to their local authorities, everything now seems to go straight back to Michael Gove."

"The most damaging decision so far has to be the scrapping of the Building Schools for the Future project, as that was a big setback for so many schools throughout the county."

Last month KoS revealed how members of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) were considering going on strike over changes to their pension schemes.

Government ministers want teachers to pay 50 per cent more into their savings than they do at present, despite a change in how their pensions are calculated which could lead to a loss in value of more than £60,000 over the course of their careers.

Mrs Harris admitted that NASUWT members could also end up taking industrial action against the changes.

She said: "To have money taken away that has already been promised to us is obviously a big problem, and we are currently in negotiations over the issue."

"We can hope the Government will move on some aspects, but if not then there will be some militancy. Given what's happened in the past, I don't expect them to listen to us."

Having already agreed to hold a ballot for strike action over the pensions issue,

the NUT has now turned its attentions to the Government's plans to rapidly expand the number of academies in England over the next few years.

Ministers want the independently-run but state-funded schools to become the norm by the end of this Parliament, but the union says the rapid growth is part of a drive towards privatisation.

NUT Kent spokesman John Walder said: "A lot of teachers don't agree with the academy expansion but they're being ignored, and that's part of the problem – there's been no real consultation."

"I think the attitudes of some teachers will change as time goes on, as academies now have a lot more power to change teachers' pay, terms and conditions, and prospects of employment."

"The people who are driving the expansion – Gove and his friends – are against local government and are eager to remove education from its control, despite saying they want to return power to the localities."

"This will almost certainly lead to private companies spouting up and providing an education service without anyone really knowing what standards are expected of them."



**BAD REPORT:** Michael Gove's policies are not popular with teachers



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## IMMIGRATION

# Fears Britain about to face new wave of migrants sees border controls tightened

By Marijke Cox

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BORDER controls are being stepped up to stop North African migrants trying to smuggle themselves into Britain on high-speed Eurostar trains.

Hundreds of Tunisian and Libyan migrants have set up camp near the Gare du Nord station in Paris where Eurostar trains run to Kent and London.

There are fears the migrants, who are part of a wave of immigration caused by civil unrest in Arab countries, will pay people-smugglers to get them into the country.

It comes as France pushes for tighter border controls with President Nicolas Sarkozy and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi calling for the Schengen Treaty – which allows passport-free movement between 25 EU countries – to be revised. The European Commission is currently preparing



to tighten up border-free travel to tackle large migration flows. Thousands of North African migrants have recently descended on Italy, with Berlusconi begging his French counterpart to share the burden. Hundreds

of migrants are now camped in Paris with hopes of travelling to Britain, after President Sarkozy clamped down on migrants making it harder for them to get work.

Immigration minister and

Ashford MP Damian Green said there were strict British immigration controls in place and additional security checks on transport leaving France for the UK. "We are maintaining this strong regime. Britain has

6699

**We are working to build border control capability on both sides of the Mediterranean to avoid unwarranted migration flows into the EU**

UK BORDER AGENCY

offered Italy practical assistance to help maintain border controls and asylum processes. Those seeking international protection are expected to claim asylum in the first safe country they enter," he said.

A spokesman from the UK Border Agency said the situation was being monitored carefully.

"Priority in North Africa is providing humanitarian assistance in the region," he said. "We are monitoring the situation and working with EU countries to build border and immigration control capability on both sides of the Mediterranean to avoid unwarranted migration flows into the EU."

Sixty migrants were arrested in France amid the clamp down of immigration controls in France. Reports stated they had set up camp in Paris with a view to enter England where they believe there is more chance of getting help.

But a spokesman for Euro-tunnel said the company was at a very high level of alert, with state-of-the-art security systems and contact with British and French frontier authorities to ensure they were aware of any current threats.

## INSPIRATIONAL SHOW GARDENS - OPENING Sat 21st MAY

It was called a mini Chelsea Flower Show and it's being extended for a second year, with three new gardens - and the four existing ones revamped, so there'll be even more to see.

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## ENTERTAINMENT

# Comic Fry tweets on wildlife park trip

By Marijke Cox

[marijke.cox@archant.co.uk](mailto:marijke.cox@archant.co.uk)

MUCH-LOVED luminary Stephen Fry has paid a visit to Port Lympne Wild Animal Park to film part of a new language documentary.

And despite suffering from severe back pain, the QI presenter said he had had a "simply fabulous time".

On the way to the wildlife park, near Folkestone, on Monday, his mood seemed dour, and he wrote on social networking site Twitter: "Being driven to Lympne for more language documentary filming. Back in agony. Missing snooker final. Far from my favourite day."

But hours later the avid Tweeter's spirits had lifted: "Had a simply fabulous time in Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, despite back."

"Communes with gorillas, capuchin, colobus and Diana monkeys."

Fry – a comedian, actor, broadcaster and writer with a passion for the English language – is also a well-known conservationist.

A vice president for Fauna and Flora International – a charity aiming to conserve biodiversity – Fry has also carried out conservation work through the Healthy Planet charity.

Port Lympne's head of communications, Eddie Kemsley, said it was a pleasure to have the star at the wild animal park.

"Mr Fry is a passionate conservationist, so it was a pleasure to share our work at Port Lympne with him," he said.

"Port Lympne Wild Animal Experience works in conjunction with a world leading conservation charity, The Aspinall Foundation, to protect endangered species across the globe."

He added: "Mr Fry spent the day at Port Lympne to film for a new television programme."

"He was an absolute pleasure to host and we look forward to seeing the result and sharing more details about the project later in the year."

Part of Fry's conservation work saw him join the Save the Rhino campaign at the Royal Geographical Society in 2009.

The Aspinall Foundation has recently added its voice to a growing campaign of awareness which urges governments and individuals to address the issue of rhino poaching in Africa.

Howletts, near Canterbury, and Port Lympne house 19 eastern black rhinos, one of the four subspecies of Black rhino.

The collection is the largest breeding herd of black rhino outside Africa, and has bred 32 calves to date.

Some 800 African rhinos have been killed by poachers for their horns in the past three years.

Animal director at Port Lympne, Adrian Harland, said: "Now more than ever, breeding programmes like ours play a crucial role in the ongoing survival of black rhino."



## HERITAGE

# Fort Amherst bridges the gap for visitors

PRINCE William has received a wedding present from Kent – a new footbridge named in his honour.

The bridge connects the Great Lines in Gillingham to Fort Amherst in Chatham, which on the day of the ceremony fired off a 21-gun salute to William and his bride, Kate, now Duchess of Cambridge.

It also marked the permanent opening to the public of the fort's parkland, with the Great Lines Heritage Park also now boasting an extra four hectares of green space for visitors to explore.

This is the final phase in a series of works at the Great Lines Heritage Park funded by central government and the European Union.

Other work has included four kilometres of new pathway, a brand new entrance to the park from Brompton Road (opposite Medway Park) and a low-energy lighting



Picture: SIMON KELSEY

scheme for the fort and memorial.

Chatham World Heritage manager Joanne Cable said: "The new Prince William's Bridge is a tremendous asset for Fort Amherst, the Great Lines Heritage Park, the potential World Heritage Site.

"We look forward to visitors being able to explore the fort and learn about its role in protecting Chatham Dockyard from attack."

Pam Wood, vice-chairwoman of the Friends of Great Lines Heritage Park, added: "The views from the

top of the fort give you a real feel of the area's military past, while looking out at the developments at Rochester riverside gives an insight into the changing face of Medway.

"The area we are so proud of has at last started to come together."

## CEREMONY:

A piper plays at the opening of Prince William's Bridge, which will link Fort Amherst to the Great Lines in Gillingham

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**WATCHING:** While fans saw the wedding on a big screen at Leeds Castle, the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Allan Willett, attended the event in person

## ROYAL WEDDING

# We go red, white and blue for royal delight



**By Chris Britcher**

[chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

THE sun shone, the bride shimmered, and the county took to the streets in style to mark the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge - better known as Prince William and Kate Middleton.

Close to 200 street parties took place across Kent - with dozens of other special events taking place in village halls and other venues.

Among those attending the ceremony at Westminster Abbey itself was Allan Willett, the Lord Lieutenant, and the Queen's representative in Kent.

He said this week: "The atmosphere was amazing. Inside, the abbey is quite small and there was an intimate, personal feel to the service which was most moving. Prince William is a lovely man and she is quite beautiful. I was thrilled for both of



**HAPPY DAY:** The newly titled Duke and Duchess of Cambridge travelled from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace in a horse-drawn carriage

them and wanted to tell everyone how much Kent loves them and is behind them.

"People say no-one can stage events like this as well as the Brit-

ish, and there's no doubt we are very good at it. The whole thing has been a wonderful experience. In Prince William and his bride the future of the monarchy is in very good hands."

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### TRIO OF EVENTS:

Street party organisers Paul Aspin, Eleanor Bishop, Julia Suddick and Gaynor Aspin, with the Maypole landlords Kev and Lesley, in Borden, near Sittingbourne; Sitting down together at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham; The streets of Dartford town centre were filled with crowds of well-wishers





**FUN:** From top left: Happy smiles in Stephens Road, Tunbridge Wells; The residents gathered in Norman Road, Canterbury, and also in Beaconsfield Road in Maidstone; Eastwell Manor in Ashford threw a party; and Gravesend held one of the biggest gatherings in the country



Picture: PAUL JERREAT



**ALL SMILES:**

Clockwise from left: Families gathered together at Leeds Castle, near Maidstone; Pauline Field and Dee Scott hosted a cake stall in aid of Marie Curie at a party in Borden, near Sittingbourne; Youngsters dressed the part at Dover College; Tables lined Silverdale Road in Tunbridge Wells

Picture: PAUL JERREAT



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## HOMELESSNESS

# Charity's plea to change a future as more homeless people ask for their help

By Steve Knight

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A HOMELESS charity has reported an increase of nearly 25 per cent in a year in the number of people asking for assistance.

Canterbury-based Porchlight said it was approached by 890 people seeking help with finding somewhere to live in 2010, compared to 714 the year before.

Chief executive Mike Barrett told the BBC he expected the rise to continue due to a shortage of suitable rented accommodation, and that many of those seeking help were "sofa-surfing" or staying with friends.

He said: "There are many people in that position, and that's going to get worse as the benefit reforms bite.

"Employment is not out there. What is out there is low-paid employment so people are not able to match the needs of their landlords in terms

of their rent, so it's a problem. It's a nightmare waiting to happen."

Last October Porchlight launched its Change a Future campaign to encourage members of the public to help the charity's outreach team find more rough sleepers.

The project was originally piloted in Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Shepway and Ashford before being rolled out across the rest of the country, and is proving highly successful with an average of 40 calls per day.

Strategic manager Chris Coffey said: "The people we are talking about don't appear on the official statistics because they don't go to their local councils and fill in forms to say they are homeless.

"They're very often not engaged in public services so we have to spend a lot of time building relationships before we can even think about addressing issues such as alcohol, drugs and other reasons why they may be on the street.

"You can't just tell them they've got an appointment at 3pm. You need to build up that trust over a cup of tea or cigarette first."

Last March the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, paid a visit to a new 21-bed sheltered accommodation project in Canterbury that was provided by Porchlight. He told KoS at the time that government spending cuts were putting vulnerable people at risk.

Mr Coffey said he was surprised at how many people were calling in with information on rough sleepers.

He added: "It highlights a need. It might be homeless people ringing in themselves or others who may just have found a sleeping bag in a bush or something.

"The people answering the telephones are quite often experienced in this area. About one-third were previously homeless themselves."

Call 0800 567 7699 or visit [www.porchlight.org.uk/changeafuture](http://www.porchlight.org.uk/changeafuture).



OUT: There has been an increase in the number of homeless people asking for help



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## ENVIRONMENT

# Battle over ancient woodland steps up

By Marijke Cox

marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

A LEADING conservation charity has vowed to stop the expansion of a ragstone quarry over claims it would destroy precious ancient woodland.

Campaigners from the Woodland Trust are calling on Kent residents to help stop the development, which could see 33 hectares – about 30 football pitches – of land at Oaken Wood in Aylesford, near Maidstone, eaten up by growth.

Planning officers at County Hall have already recommended the expansion of Hermitage Quarry, owned by Gallagher Ltd, with a final decision due on Tuesday.

The planning application stated that at the current production rate at the quarry, the existing reserves at the site would be exhausted within four years. However, this was disputed by the trust based on findings from an independent planning consultant.

Christina Byrne, woods under threat case officer at the Woodland Trust, said the charity "deplored the conclusions" of KCC's planning report.

She added: "It is pure madness that anyone would sanction grubbing up the UK's equivalent of the rainforest, which is a finite resource, for a ragstone quarry when it is not even needed to meet local demand.

"The unique conditions of ancient woodland make it our richest wildlife habitat, and it is literally irreplaceable.

"Once destroyed, you cannot recreate it with new planting or by soil translocation, so no mitigation put forward here can compensate for this loss."

The KCC planning report stated that surveys would need to be carried out at the site to ensure the ecological interests of the area were protected throughout the duration of quarrying operations.

A team of officers from KCC, Natural England, Gallagher Ltd and wildlife specialists would also be set up to help in the management of the site.

Land creating a new habi-

tat for wildlife as well as replanting of native broadleaved woodland was proposed in the application.

But the Woodland Trust said the charity would be taking legal advice and would fight any decision by KCC's planning committee to accept the findings of the report.

The charity argued that recommendations by KCC to push ahead with the expansion were in contravention of Government planning guidelines, which contain a strong presumption against development in areas of ancient woodland.

The organisation also said the quarrying operations would not only destroy a core area, but would have a huge indirect impact on the neighbouring woodland.

Independent research commissioned by the trust revealed that by fragmenting habitats, species would be unable to move between them and could avoid the woodland near the quarry altogether.

It also found that adjoining land use could cause high levels of dust, sudden or sustained noise and chemical drift several miles downwind, which

would degrade the woodland.

Ms Byrne added: "A staggering 85 per cent of the UK's ancient woodland has no statutory protective designation, so the trust is well-versed in disputing planning decisions as they affect ancient woods.

"In the last decade we have taken up the cases of 850 of them and currently we are looking at over 400 woods under threat of development, so we are fully prepared to act in defence of Oaken Wood."

■ Visit [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/oakenwood](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/oakenwood) for more information.

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

## War veteran struck with MS finishes his rally for heroes



**874-MILE TREK:** Simon Angel on his mobility scooter with vehicle support driver Mick Weaving

A SOLDIER who suffers from severe Multiple Sclerosis, triggered by wartime trauma, has completed a £10,000 charity trek from John O'Groats to Land's End – on a mobility scooter.

Simon Angel, 46, from Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells, was a member of the Royal Engineers for 22 years and has served all around the world with front-line experience in Northern Ireland and the Gulf War.

He was awarded an MBE in 2000 and decided to embark on his charity challenge to raise money for the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes.

Mr Angel said: "There are too many highlights to mention, however driving over the dramatic Cairngorms, paying my respects at the National Memorial Arboretum, passing through Wooten Bassett and reaching Land's End made an impact.

"My support guy Mick Weaving has been like a rock and I couldn't have achieved it without him. The past month has been one of the most memorable for me in my whole life, and the final donations – which should hopefully top £10,000 – will help fellow injured servicemen and women who are the true heroes in this story."

It took Mr Angel 30 days to complete the 874-mile 'Rally for Remembrance', which he decided to do while being treated for combat stress at Tyrwhitt House.

■ Visit [www.rallyforremembrance.co.uk](http://www.rallyforremembrance.co.uk) to make a donation.

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## RENOVATION

## Developers to give new life to old building

A CRUMBLING listed building is to be brought back to life thanks to funding from Kent County Council's No Use Empty scheme.

Private development company Vernon Investments has secured a loan of £175,000 from the programme, so it can meet the total development costs needed to turn the building in London Road into nine self-contained flats.

The three-storey listed building is more than 100 years old and had fallen into a state of disrepair after standing empty for more than four years. It had been targeted by vandals, the back garden area has become a dumping ground and there was evidence of drug use at the property.

KCC cabinet member for regeneration and economic development, Kevin Lynes, said: "This is a perfect example of how this scheme can make a direct difference to people's lives. The value of these loans goes far beyond just renovating a property."

## COUNCIL SPENDING

# KCC to scrap private health insurance for its senior managers

By Steve Knight

[steve.knight@archant.co.uk](mailto:steve.knight@archant.co.uk)

COUNTY Hall finance chiefs are planning to scrap a controversial health insurance scheme for senior workers.

The provision of private healthcare only exists in a small number of local authorities, but last November Kent County Council came fourth in a national league table after splashing out almost £200,000 on expensive premiums for just 250 employees.

Fiona McEvoy, campaign manager for the Taxpayers' Alliance, said at the time: "It's ridiculous that council top brass have been treated to private medical treatment with taxpayers' money."

"If they want to go private then they can choose to do so, but they should pay for it out of their own generous salaries. We already pay for the NHS, and if that's good enough for us then it should be good enough for senior managers at KCC."

Ms McEvoy's comments appear to

have been taken on board by the authority, which has now proposed to scrap the scheme to deliver savings of £200,000.

The plan will go before full council for approval on Wednesday.

It was noted in a report to members that authorities including Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and some colleges also access the insurance scheme.

The report read: "Over recent years the provision of employee benefits has moved on. Schemes such as SOMI (Senior Officer Medical Insurance) are now inequitable since it could be argued that supporting staff responsible for frontline delivery is just as important."

"Given the relatively low numbers of people covered, the costs involved and the unsustainable basis of its provision, the scheme is not now seen as being fit for purpose."

"The personnel committee recommends county council approve the withdrawal of the SOMI scheme and

## HEALTHY CUT:

The move will save almost £200,000 in expensive healthcare premiums



agree that it ceases operation, including ongoing commitments, by the end of this financial year."

It was revealed last November that a total of about £2.9 million was spent on private healthcare last year for more than 5,000 members of staff at 56 councils throughout the UK.

The most senior officers at KCC pay their own medical insurance premiums, but 250 other managers had

the £750 bill paid for them last year.

The figures were revealed by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, which requested data from councils across the UK to identify areas in which it felt they could save money without cutting vital services for residents.

KCC needs to save £9.5m this year, followed by a further £6.5m next year after its government funding was slashed by 10 per cent.

## ROAD SAFETY

## Weeks of walking aim to cut traffic and help improve our health too

TEACHERS, parents and children are being encouraged to walk to school in Medway over the next fortnight.

Walk to Work Week runs from May 9-13 and Walk to School Week from May 16-20, with Medway council's road safety team urging everyone to get involved.

The aim of the challenges is for schools to achieve the highest number of walks possible. The school that wins will be presented with a trophy and certificate to celebrate their success.

Safer journeys officer James Sutton said: "We want residents to ask themselves whether going

by car is necessary. Walking increases our road awareness, which is particularly important for children and young people to learn."

Active travel co-ordinator Hazel Gallagher added: "We hope we can help people foster a new-found fondness for walking, to improve their health, wallets and also contribute to reducing the number of cars on our roads. This will have a significant impact on a pedestrian's journey to make it a much more pleasant and ultimately a safer one."

Contact Mr Sutton on 01634 331399 or email [james.sutton@medway.gov.uk](mailto:james.sutton@medway.gov.uk) for more details.



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## RESTORATION

# Forensic tests used to reveal rare furniture's hidden secrets

By Jenna Pudelek

jenna.pudelek@archant.co.uk

A FASCINATING project to discover what happened to important antique furniture over the centuries is set to be launched at Knole.

Experts at the National Trust house in Sevenoaks will carry out forensic examinations on a Queen Anne period sofa and two chairs, which are hundreds of years old, before they are restored.

Freelance textile conservator Kate Gill will be working on the furniture using non-invasive techniques including UV light and magnification for her investigation. She will also be taking samples to analyse the weave, fibre and dyes.

The trust said that historic records showed previous residents at Knole had tried to preserve the collection in ways that would horrify conservators today. For example, the 1864 inventory of the house refers to "a blue and white embroidered satin counterpane with fringe border", which was "cut up to cover chairs [and] stools".

But no one really knows how the three pieces of furniture were made and have been treated, preserved, re-upholstered, patched, damaged or mended in hundreds of years.

Visitors will be able to see Ms Gill at work in the Reynolds Room from June 1-3 and 8-10.

Knole's furniture is of international significance with many pieces from the royal

palaces including the lost palace of Whitehall, which was destroyed by fire in 1698.

The trust said the collection needed urgent conservation with the colours faded and delicate silks shredded.

A spokeswoman said: "Before a major conservation project on the furniture gets underway, we need to know more about how the furniture was made, what materials were used in the construction and, most interestingly, what has happened to them over the centuries. While the three pieces chosen cannot tell us everything about Knole's collection, knowing what lies beneath will be of enormous importance in planning its conservation."

The forensic examination of the furniture is part of a wider conservation project at Knole. Already a strikingly realistic 3D photographic wallpaper has replaced the contents of the Reynolds Room. The room is one of 13 unheated, dark, draughty and leaky showrooms, which are being restored to protect their valuable content.

All the paintings, including works by the influential 18th century artists Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough, and furniture has been removed.

Over the winter, the windows were sealed with new lead, the floor and ceiling insulated, and the wall rewired and primed with environmental monitors.

The vinyl photographic wallpaper was then fastened into place. A room-sized electric



**DELVING DEEP:** This chair is part of the Knole collection which will be subjected to a series of forensic examinations

heating mat has been placed on the floor and a further three standing heaters brought in, which will gently heat the space when humidity levels rise above a certain level.

More than 90,000 visitors will pass through the room this summer breathing out moisture and shedding dust.

The trust said this was an essential part of the project. The room will be monitored to find the most stable conservation conditions.

Once these have been discovered the panoramic will be removed, the wall insulated and proper lighting installed. Then everything will be put back and the Reynolds Room will return to its former glory.

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CRIME

# MP working to stop women re-offending

MAIDSTONE MP Helen Grant is campaigning to break the cycle of re-offending by female ex-prisoners.

The former family lawyer, who serves on the House of Commons Justice Committee, visited two of the county's prisons to see what is being done to tackle the problem.

She admitted she was concerned that short-term sentences were less effective for women than men.

"Robust community sentences can be a successful alternative in keeping women out of prison and preventing re-offending," she said.

"We have around 4,000 women in British prisons, and most are serving short sentences, with 64 per cent serving less than six months.

"Those serving short sentences are not subject to supervision on release, and their prison stay

isn't long enough to provide rehabilitation.

"The result is a vicious circle of family breakdown, children being taken into care and re-offending, at huge cost to the taxpayer."

Mrs Grant said she was looking to visit women's prison HMP Holloway to see how staff use education to rehabilitate prisoners.

She has also been in contact with The Corston Independent Funders' Coalition and Make Justice Work, two organisations looking to break the cycle of re-offending.

In Kent, the Maidstone and the Weald representative, who was elected last year, visited HMP East Sutton Park, an open female prison in a large country estate in Sutton Valence, and HMP Maidstone, an all-male Victorian prison in the town centre, with capacity for 600 inmates.

"The two prisons could not be more different," she said. "But they both provide excellent care and a complete range of rehabilitation programmes designed to ensure that people leaving their charge, do so with the best possible opportunities to engage with the employment market and become contributing members of the community."

Mrs Grant said she will be working with prison and rehabilitation organisations to see if more can be achieved to reduce re-offending.

Serving on the Justice Committee alongside 11 other members, Mrs Grant helps scrutinise the policy, administration and spending of the Ministry of Justice.

Members also examine the work of the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, the Serious Fraud Office and the Crown Prosecution Service.



**PRISON VISITOR:** MP Helen Grant with Andy Hudson, governor of HMP Maidstone

NHS

# Trust back on track after warning from watchdog

By Jenna Pudelek

jenna.pudelek@archant.co.uk

HOSPITAL bosses say their finances are back on track, despite strong criticism from a health watchdog.

Monitor, the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts, last week fired a warning shot across the bow of the Medway NHS Foundation Trust, saying it was in "significant breach" of duties relating to its foundation status.

In response, the trust said it admitted it had failed to meet its financial plans for 2010/11 and had tightened its plans for the current year accordingly.

But should it fail to hit the measures insisted upon by Monitor, it could face the regulator intervening. The watchdog's powers include removing any or all of a trust's directors or governors, and closing specific services.

The trust is also considering a money-saving merger with Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust.

Dr David Bennett, chair of the regulator, said: "We've taken this decision due to concerns about the level of board challenge on financial issues and about the trust's plans to return to a stable financial footing.

"As the regulator of foundation trusts, it's our role to make sure that they are well-led, that their boards are focused on the quality of care patients get and that they are financially strong – but we

don't performance manage them.

"The trust's board is accountable to the community for the effective delivery of services, and responsible for identifying problems and addressing them. We only take action if a trust doesn't deal with issues quickly and effectively.

"Monitor will continue to work with the board at Medway NHS Foundation Trust to ensure that it takes the action necessary to make a sustainable return to full compliance, and that it does so at an appropriate pace.

"We will also continue to work closely with the CQC (Care Quality Commission) to ensure the continued provision of high quality services to the patients the trust serves. If evidence suggests the trust is not addressing issues effectively, we will consider whether further regulatory action is appropriate."

Monitor said it would not use its formal intervention powers, but would continue to review the trust's progress.

A spokesman for the trust said: "The trust board is naturally disappointed with this announcement, but understands why Monitor is taking this precautionary measure.

"The trust's financial plans for 2010/2011 were ambitious, with a savings target of £15 million, of which more than 90 per cent of planned savings were achieved. The shortfall, coupled with other significant one-off losses in the year, led to the trust failing to

meet its financial plans in 2010/11. The trust board has ensured that financial plans for the current financial year are more robust.

"In all other respects, the hospital performed well last year, exceeding all patient access targets and achieving the best infection control performance in the south east coast region.

"Patients can also be reassured that the trust's commitment to offering the highest standard of care, as measured by the Care Quality Commission, remains unaffected.

"The board will be working closely with Monitor to return to compliance as soon as possible."

Meanwhile, the troubled trust is looking at the possibility of merging with the Dartford and Gravesham trust to ensure long-term sustainability.

The move has been put down to the Government's major shake-up of the NHS set out in the controversial Health and Social Care Bill, which has now been 'paused' after much criticism, and increasing financial pressures.

Integrating the trusts would reduce management costs and maximise the use of each hospital's facilities, the spokesman said.

A feasibility study is being carried out and the trusts said they would consult with staff, patients and other interested parties. The trusts are aiming for the merge to be approved by April 2012.

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## COMPETITION

# WIN tickets to Leeds Castle Open Air Classical Concert

THE Leeds Castle Open Air Classical Concert on Saturday, July 16, led by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's signature blend of superb music and stunning spectacle, features a prestigious line-up and welcomes back award-winning actor Robert Powell as the narrator.

And you could be there for free, thanks to our great competition.

Stirring performances, under the baton of much respected conductor John Rigby, will be given by many well known classical names, such as soprano singer Elizabeth Watts, baritone Richard Morrison, and Wynne Evans.

Mr Evans, one of the UK's leading tenors, is also known as Gio Compario from the Go Compare adverts. He shot to the top of the classical charts with his debut album A Song In My Heart.

One of the UK's leading tenors, Mr Evans has sung as a principal at leading opera houses including Royal Opera House, Welsh National Opera and English National Opera, and performed at more than 20 Welsh rugby Internationals.



**TOP TENOR:** Wynne Evans, aka Gio Compario, will perform at Leeds

The vocal talents of Capital Voices will also be performing a number of West End songs from the hits of the Abba musical Mamma Mia.

The dynamic conductor/orchestra partnership promises to provide an exceptional and diverse musical repertoire, accompanied by spectacles such as a nostalgic flypast by two Spitfires marking the 75th anniversary of this iconic aeroplane.

Billed as one of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's favourite events, John Rigby said: "What a great show this is, 12,000 people all stood waving flags and as the Spitfires flew past hairs stood on the back of my neck last year. We can't wait for this year's event."

The concert is sponsored by Archant KOS Media, BBC Radio Kent and Davis Renault of Sevenoaks.

We have four pairs of tickets to give away. To be in with a chance of winning one of them, simply answer the following question:

**Q) Who will be narrating this year's concert?**

**A) Robert Powell**

**B) Brian Blessed**

**C) Terry Wogan**

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Texts cost £1 plus standard network rates. Closing date is May 17. Entries received after the closing date will not be counted but you may still be charged.

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The tickets cannot be transferred, exchanged or sold and are only valid for the July 16, 2011, Classical Open Air Concert at Leeds Castle, Maidstone

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For full terms and conditions go to [www.heritageevents.co.uk/terms.php](http://www.heritageevents.co.uk/terms.php).

Tickets are on sale now for the Classical Open Air Concert at £34 each for picnic style and only £44 each in the seated areas.

For more information go to [www.heritageevents.co.uk](http://www.heritageevents.co.uk).

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## LITERATURE

# Sci-fi author leads e-book revolution

By Mathew Beech

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A SCI-FI novelist is leading a literary revolution as he begins an interactive e-book project.

Stewart Ross, from Blean, near Canterbury, published the first chapter of his story *The Soterion Mission* on Friday, with online readers able to guide the direction of the plot by voting on a series of options.

"It's a new way of getting young adults into reading via the internet," said Mr Ross.

"At the end of each chapter there will be a three-way vote which will be made online.

"The future of the written word is definitely in some electronic form or another so I'm really excited to be part of this venture.

"It's not 100 per cent different to how Dickens worked, releasing single episodes at a time and letting the readers influence the story.

"I see the story like a valley, but the course of the river is determined by the reader.

"A new chapter is released at 3.30pm, so the audience gets a chance to read it after work or school, then they get to vote on what happens next and the results are fed to me on the Monday, giving me a few days to write the next chapter."

With some 250 published works, Mr Ross is one of Britain's most popular authors and has won prizes from, among other bodies, the Arts Council, the Times Literary Supplement and the American Library Association.

The *Soterion Mission* is set in the year 2090 when a disease has limited the human life span to less than two decades.

If the project is successful there are already plans for a sequel.

Read the first chapter by visiting the website: [www.fictionexpress.co.uk](http://www.fictionexpress.co.uk).



## CHALLENGE

## Scooter record bid

TWO women who suffer from multiple sclerosis are to take part in the first mobility scooter 24-hour endurance challenge.

Jackie Weeden and Kate Davies, of the Red Wheelies formation display team, will attempt to break a Guinness World Record at Fowlmead Country Park, near Deal, next weekend.

The event runs from 1pm on Saturday, May 14, until 1pm on the Sunday, with a traditional funfair, classic car/bike show and more on offer.

## ENVIRONMENT

## Waste licence offence

A WASTE company has been ordered to pay £87,000 for continued breaches of its licence.

Orpington-based Sitec Ltd pleaded guilty to allowing sewage to leak into a nearby beauty spot, and storing significantly more waste than the site could cope with.

The company was fined £75,000 plus £12,000 court costs when the Environment Agency case was heard at Bromley Magistrates' Court.

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## EDUCATION

# Carnage at college highlights dangers of careless driving

By Chris Britcher

[chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

STUDENTS of K College in Tonbridge found out exactly what it would be like to be cut from the wreckage of a car when Kent Fire and Rescue Service carried out a demonstration using two students as 'victims'.

Principal Bill Fearon was among those getting involved in the project, designed to highlight the dangers of driving to the students.

He was strapped into a seat belt machine, which gives the passenger an idea of what an impact feels like at between eight and 10mph.

He said: "We have a high proportion of young people who drive now, and who use cars to come to college, and this is essential for their understanding of why they must use a seat belt and other road safety laws.

"The seat belt machine doesn't look like it's going that fast, but the impact is quite significant. I would think anyone with false teeth would have seen them flying out across the pavement – I'm glad I've got my own!"

The demonstration is called Car'n'age and aims to encourage young drivers and passengers to be responsible for their own and others' safety while driving.

Tutors who set up the visit at the Brook Street campus said many students were shocked by what they had seen.

For public services student, Sam Wild, 29, from Longmead in Tonbridge, it brought back memories of when she was involved in a serious car accident when she was seven.

She explained: "My Dad was driving when he hit a patch of black ice

and hit a tree. We had to be cut out of the car, but I didn't remember much about it because I was so young. There was a lot of noise.

"This has really brought it back, and a lot of people in our class say it has really made them realise how important safety is."

Two students volunteered to be in the car cut open by the fire crew.

One of them, Jasmine Card, said: "It was scary. I was in a really compacted space and I definitely wouldn't want to be in that position for real."

Ijaz Ahmedzai, added: "I don't ever want to be in that position again. The fire crews did a great job, but it was frightening."

The Tonbridge fire crews visited K College's North Farm campus in Tunbridge Wells in the afternoon.

■ See [www.yourtonbridge.co.uk](http://www.yourtonbridge.co.uk) for news updated regularly.



**CRASH SHOCK:** Students with the cut-up car, and below, Bill Fearon in the hot seat

## JARGON

## How Rick Astley has a lot to answer for online

THERE'S no doubt that our vocabulary has changed in a very short space of time – a lot of it thanks to the internet.

Our conversations seem littered with jargon on a daily basis, much of which hadn't been heard of before the computer age: world-wide-web, jpeg, blogs, tweets, WAV, webcasts, spam, URL, and the list goes on.

A recent new one to me is the term 'internet meme'. What on earth does that mean?

Well, apparently an 'internet meme' is a 'bait and switch'; basically it's when a person provides a hyperlink that they claim is relevant to a particular topic, but when the user clicks on the link they are taken to a completely different site.

A great example of this is 'Rick Roll' – when internet users are tricked into thinking they are logging on to one particular site but are taken straight to a video of Rick Astley performing his 1987 hit Never Gonna Give You Up!

The pop star wasn't responsible for the craze, but it has certainly not done his career any harm and this meme has proved so popular it has even been copied by a group of American state politicians, who slipped the lyrics of Astley's number one hit into their speeches on the floor of the House of Representatives.

They did it under the noses of colleagues, lobbyists, staff and the public and then released a YouTube video on April Fool's Day that went viral and has had 780,000 views.

The practical joke was masterminded by Jefferson Smith, a Portland Democrat who managed to persuade his colleagues to speak the lyrics of the pop ballad a word or phrase at a time.

### JULIE MADDOCKS VIEWPOINT...



This idea itself isn't entirely new, I heard my boys discussing a similar scheme that they have often played, particularly at work.

One of my son Matt's part-time jobs, as he funds his way through university, is in a call centre. To brighten their working day their mission was to include certain phrases or words within their conversations with customers.

All very childish, I know, but it makes the day go faster and it's not hurting anyone.

It reminded me of my years on local radio when I was often 'set up'. On one occasion someone decided it would be fun to include an imaginary animal in the list of appeals I was due to read in our lost and found pets spot.

The script read something along these lines:

"The next cat has gone missing in Tonbridge. He's an old, grey scruffy tabby, with one eye, half his left ear missing, a broken tail, and three legs who answers to the name of Lucky!"

Sadly, I hadn't had time to pre-read the announcement and was half way through reading it when I realised I'd been had.

Oh, how we laughed. It's just as well we were good friends at the time, and I'm glad to say, remain so today.

I know – with friends like that...

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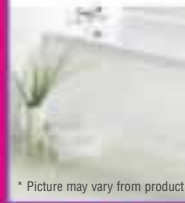
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Deva mono kitchen sink tap

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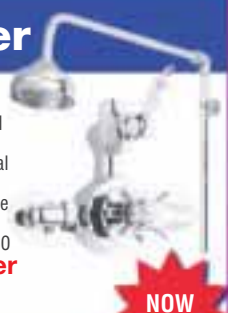
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## EDUCATION

# College students hear Paralympian's inspirational story

By Jenna Pudelek

[jenna.pudelek@archant.co.uk](mailto:jenna.pudelek@archant.co.uk)

A PARALYMPIC world champion rower has paid a visit to a further education college to inspire students.

Alastair McKean, 32, spent the day at Hadlow College and explained to the young people how he overcame personal problems to achieve sporting success.

His visit was part of his role as an athlete mentor for Sky Sports Living for Sport, which is an initiative in partnership with the Youth Sport Trust that aims to use the power of sport to encourage 11 to 16-year-olds to strive for the best.

Mr McKean said: "I know first-hand how much of a positive effect sport can have across all areas of an individual's life – on both a personal level as well as a professional one.

"I hope that, by sharing my life story and the influences sport has had on me as a person, I can help these students see how lessons learnt from taking part, such as building the confidence to lead or developing the social skills required to become an effective team player, can help them

fulfil their full potential."

During his visit last Thursday, he worked with 25 students and ran a practical team building session before spending the afternoon helping the young people set personal and professional goals.

Katie Major, school sports coordinator at Hadlow College, said: "Alastair McKean provided our students with a real-life example of how, whatever their ambitions in life, lessons learned through sport can help them realise their dreams and reach their full potential.

"We were delighted to welcome such a high profile and inspiring figure to our school and the students looked forward to the day with immense pride and anticipation."

The initiative was created to encourage students to develop and apply life skills learned through participating in sport, such as confidence, respect, and a sense of achievement, helping them to believe in themselves and their ability to achieve their goals.

It is provided through online planning tools, resources and a supply of free sports clothing. It helps teachers to support young people across



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**I know first-hand how much of a positive effect sport can have across all areas of an individual's life, on a personal and professional level**

ALASTAIR MCKEAN, ON SPORT

areas such as attainment and achievement, health and well-being and self-esteem. The initiative has been running for eight years.

Mr McKean is among 23 sports stars chosen as athlete mentors, who all have inspiring personal journeys.

Mr McKean, who comes from Canterbury, won a bronze medal in the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games. He started rowing in 1994, at Herne Bay Amateur Rowing Club.

As a talented junior rower he won various medals before he was involved in a serious road accident in 1999.

A bird flew into his visor while he was riding a motorbike, which knocked him off balance and caused a head-on collision with a lorry.

It left him with a loss of 80 per cent function in his right arm.

■ For more information about the initiative visit <http://livingforsport.skysports.com>.

## WORDS OF WISDOM:

Alastair McKean (fourth left, back row) was a visitor at Hadlow College in his role as an athlete mentor for Sky Sports Living for Sport

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OPINION

# Room to heal the whole person

Dr Gareth Tuckwell, chief executive of Burrswood Hospital, explains the thinking behind the spiritual and medical care offered to patients

HEALTHCARE today is so often seen in terms of specialties, sub-specialties and procedures, rather than being centred round individuals and the totality of their need: a need that often springs from isolation.

In the UK, almost seven million people live alone, nearly a third of whom have a chronic or progressive disease.

Medical care is changing, because of superb diagnostic tools as well as the pressures of an ageing population. In the UK we have the additional pressures faced by the NHS. Doctors struggle to think outside the box.

Evidence-based medicine and technology, whilst commendable, mean doctors rarely see the need to question cogently, listen carefully or observe keenly. The clinical diagnosis is discovered on the screen or in the test results, but is that enough?

So often we find the patient's story has not been heard prior

to their admission. With a speedy consultation the sensitivity to language and emotion is lost and the real cause of malaise and dysfunction is often missed. We can fail to see the person in the patient.

As far as spiritual care goes, with NHS trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) driven to balance the books and only spend on 'best value', there is growing evidence that employing chaplains is a low priority.

Yet, whatever our faith or lack of it, within us all is a search for meaning. Each one of us has spiritual needs which tend to surface in times of illness. We need opportunities to make sense of whatever comes our way.

Burrswood is much more than just a hospital and the breadth of what goes on astonishes visitors. It is a place apart, a place of healing, spacious, much prayed in and with a pervading sense of peace.

Bishop Morris Maddocks used to say that in our rushed, instant, microwaved world, space is often needed to heal; space with God, in the beauty of His creation and space filled with the presence of prayer.

But Burrswood is also a place of professional and clinical expertise. We have 40 beds for inpatients, most of whom come for short-term medical and post-operative care.

From the outpatients department to the hydrotherapy pool: from the work with those with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, post-traumatic stress and burn-out to the rehabilitation of those wanting to keep mobile and at work, despite their progressing disease, to 24/7 palliative care where not only nurses but also resident doctors and chaplains can be with you and your family at whatever time the need is there.

Burrswood must be there for the increasing number of peo-



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**Space is often needed to heal; space with God in the beauty of His creation**

ple who fall through the gaps in healthcare provision. The demand for beds is strong, but we long for everyone to realise we are delivering cutting edge care and are regarded as a centre of excellence.

The chair of a nearby PCT says we undersell ourselves, and they have no concerns about our 'Christian' label; they go for our values, our added value and ability to offer complex care.

On reflection, all that Burrswood Hospital and Place of Healing has to offer has never been more needed.

■ The hospital in Groombridge was founded by Dorothy Kerin in 1948, funded by donations.

Kerin, who died in 1963, pioneered what is now known as 'whole person care'. She believed in bringing together medicine and Christian healing. Burrswood became a fully-registered hospital in 2000. It is run by a charity.

## KOS COMMENT

Osborne offers new hope for Pfizer site

THE future could be looking brighter for business in Kent.

New hope came in the form of a hint from Chancellor George Osborne that the Pfizer site was a good location for an Enterprise Zones.

There are also welcome plans for a green energy park near the site that could create hundreds of jobs.

Pfizer's decision to pull out of Sandwich dealt a devastating blow to the whole of east Kent.

But there is clearly a future for the area and now councils and businesses must work together to promote it.

Can county's hopeful impress Lord Sugar?

OVERBLOWN claims about business prowess and boardroom battles are back as The Apprentice returns to our screens.

Canterbury's Vincent Disneur is among the 15 hopefuls competing.

The show is compulsive viewing for millions so let's hope Vincent lives up to his claims of 'unprecedented business acumen'.

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### Council need backbone

ON reading her letter of April 24, some people might be misled into feeling sympathy for poor Mrs Dean, the leader of the Lib Dems on the county council and chairman of the cabinet scrutiny committee.

Paul Carter, Conservative leader of the council, has been horrid and won't let his junior coalition partner publicly scrutinise the official report into KCC's response to the damning report on its children's services.

Mrs Dean should know that she can place any item on the agenda of the cabinet scrutiny committee provided it relates to any decision or action of the council's elected executive (the cabinet) or its officers.

It is also Mrs Dean's decision as to whether a committee meeting goes ahead or not.

The leader of the council cannot dictate what subjects are discussed or when they are discussed. That is Mrs Dean's decision and she has the power of local government legislation behind her.

Carter may try to argue that the report should be scrutinised in a closed session in order to protect individual named clients, but Mrs Dean wants to look at "how KCC proposes to tackle the backlog of neglect". So little, if anything, in the report is likely to be confidential to individuals and that could be dealt with appropriately at the meeting if required.

If Carter refuses to turn up to a scrutiny committee meeting, as Mrs Dean suggests he would, then all he would be doing is confirming publicly that he is not interested in being open and transparent about bringing children's services up to standard. If he refuses to release the report to the scrutiny committee then an item can still go on the agenda requiring that refusal to be justified.

As it is, the meeting programmed for April was abandoned. That was a decision by Mrs Dean as chairman.

What is really needed at County Hall is a little more backbone and a lot less complacency from the chairman of the cabinet scrutiny committee. Then we might get the open-

ness and transparency that Mr Carter and Mrs Dean both claim they want.

**Mike Eddy, Deal**

### Show support to care staff

TRUDY Dean says we should be working together to make improvements to Kent's children's social care as quickly as possible. That is exactly what we are doing.

All Kent County Council members have the opportunity to be as hands-on as they want, and we are all determined to play our part in achieving the council's top priority.

Two member-led panels, the first of which met last week, are making sure Ofsted's requirements are met and that we fulfil our corporate parenting role of delivering the best support and outcomes for children in our care.

Mrs Dean has no reason to feel blocked or cynical. I could not have been more open and honest about the challenges we're facing and our determination to transform children's social care.

Three weeks ago I sent

all members a copy of the improvement plan and offered to answer any questions and take feedback. I have also introduced a 'shadow a social worker' scheme so members can fully appreciate the work our dedicated team does on a daily basis at the coalface.

It's these workers who are paramount in my mind. We have taken on board the findings from Ofsted, court judgments and serious case reviews. Now is the time for everyone to come together and support those people who have one of the most challenging jobs in public service.

**Jenny Whittle, cabinet member for specialist children's services, KCC**

### It's time to fix our harbours

AFTER eight years of neglect by Thanet council's Tory administration, Margate Harbour is now in its worst state since John Rennie's stone harbour arm was first constructed early in the 19th century.

Due to the constant build-up of silt that has been allowed, there is now insufficient depth

of water to accommodate any reasonable sized sailing or motor vessel, and boat owners have been forced to moor their craft elsewhere.

Sitting on the front patio of the new Turner gallery should be a great experience, with the view to the west over Margate main sands for both residents and visitors alike. However, if the tide is not covering the rotting seaweed and mud in the harbour, a very unpleasant aroma is likely to soon drive most people inside.

At Ramsgate Royal Harbour marina, the neglect is even more marked. The absence of any planned maintenance programme has resulted in health and safety problems with pontoons and ladders, and the build-up of silt in the inner marina.

Sections of the main commercial quay are now no-go areas due to subsidence. Large weeds grow out of the basin walls and some of the pontoons at the eastern end are so old and unstable that they have even received their own 'Royal Historic' plaque.

The pier yard is a disgrace, decorated with its own rotting hulk on prominent display

alongside the detritus-strewn listed Smeaton dry dock.

Meanwhile, the Grade II-listed maritime museum, closed for years, becomes ever more run down. From the snapped-off flag pole to the smashed windows and yards of unsavoury graffiti to the rear, neglect is everywhere.

Something urgently needs to alter the years of laissez faire mismanagement of Margate and Ramsgate harbours, a change of administration at Thanet council would be the swiftest way to achieve this.

**John Watkins, Margate**

### Tories are anti-England

ERIC Pickles' comments on the EU's planned 'Arc Manche' region to bring together southern England and northern France were rather surprising.

He told the Daily Express that "Labour ministers have been caught red-handed conspiring with European bureaucrats to wipe England off the map and replace our historic boroughs, counties and cities with transnational Euro-regions", rather giving the impression he was unaware of what had been going on over the last few years.

I'm struggling to understand how that can be, given that senior Tory Brad Watson, a county councillor in West Sussex, is currently vice-president of the Channel Arc Manche Assembly. How can it be that they were unaware of the Arc Manche region given their representation on this committee?

Could it be another case of the Tories wishing to appear to defend British interests in the EU while behind closed doors handing over yet more sovereignty to Brussels?

**Nigel Farage, South East MEP, UK Independence Party**

### Buy a book to help charity

I WOULD like to inform all KoS readers of the creation of a new charity called The Book System, which raises money for air ambulance trusts.

This charity will be selling new and old books via major supermarkets in their car parks. Call 01926 640979 or email [thebooksystem@aol.com](mailto:thebooksystem@aol.com) for more information.

**Nigel L Walton, The Book System**

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## Linking into the base rate works both ways

**Q** My husband and I have a joint credit card account with Halifax, which says it will now link interest charges to the Bank of England base rate. Does this mean what it suggests? Will our interest go down if there is a cut in the official rate, or up if there is an increase? Or is it a one-way street, with rises but no reductions? Will this apply to other card companies as well?

**A** The good news is that this is not a one-way street. If the Bank of England cuts its interest rate then so will Halifax. The bad news is that with interest rates as low as they are, a cut is virtually impossible and a rise is virtually inevitable. And there are more changes on the way. From August, each cardholder will be allocated a personal interest rate. There will no longer be different rates for purchases and cash withdrawals. If you and your husband use your card only for shopping, you could see interest charges reduced, Halifax says. But if you draw cash as well, your interest will be higher. The Bank of England rate will be added to your personal interest rate, starting in November, and this will change whenever the Bank's base rate changes. Your personal rate could also change if there is any alteration in your use of the card, such as missing repayments or making heavier use of cash withdrawals. However, not all Halifax cardholders will be affected right away. If you took out your card within the past six months or if you have the Clarity card, the way your interest charges are calculated will not be changed until next year. No other card issuer is following the same path yet, but if Halifax shows it can increase its profits by squeezing a bit more out of its customers, others are likely to follow suit.

**Q** We claim working tax credit and child tax credit, and the amount we get has gone down, even though our income in April was the same as we had for March.

**A** The chancellor, George Osborne, announced new rules in his first budget last June, and those rules came into effect last month. For example, the amount of help you can get with childcare costs dropped from 80pc to 70pc. And the extra credit that was paid for babies under one year old has been scrapped completely. Another big change is that over the past year, if your total income was under £50,000, your basic child tax credit payments would not be reduced. Now the limit has dropped to £40,000. Without knowing all the details of your income and family circumstances, I cannot be sure why your credit income has fallen, but these are the biggest changes that are likely to hit you. If you think the answer lies elsewhere, the official Tax Credit Helpline (0845 300 3900)

**TONY HETHERINGTON**  
MONEY CLINIC



should be able to explain.

**Q** I read your recent advice, saying that it was no longer legal to make people retire just because they have reached 65. Can you answer two questions, please, and say whether I can draw my state pension but still carry on working – and, if so, will I be liable for national insurance contributions?

**A** There is nothing to stop you drawing your state pension and still working. Remember, though, that the state pension is taxable, so when it is added to your earnings, a chunk will almost certainly go to the tax man. One alternative, of course, is to postpone taking your pension. Do this and you will get a nice increase in the amount paid when you really do retire. As for national insurance, your employer will still have to pay contributions, but once you reach 65 you are exempt, even if you still work.

**Q** I am applying for a life policy and have been asked whether or not I smoke. Do I have to answer?

**A** If you refuse to answer, you will be turned down by the life company – it is as simple as that! Bluntly, smokers are more likely to die than non-smokers of the same age, so the life company is more likely to have to pay out. Companies do not like to say that they charge smokers extra but, typically, they will offer discounts to non-smokers.

**Q** The Post Office is paying 3.95pc interest on its cash Isa. This seems quite good. What do you think?

**A** The headline figure from the Post Office (0800 169 7500) looks good, but this is a three-year deal with a fixed rate of interest. Do you really want to tie up your money for this long, when interest rates generally are certain to rise, leaving you behind? True, you can make withdrawals, but penalties apply. Instead, consider the one-year Isa at 3.01pc, or compromise on the two-year account with interest at 3.45pc.

**■ If you have a personal-finance question, write to Tony Hetherington, MyMoney24, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE. We regret that neither Tony nor the MyMoney24 team can enter into personal correspondence.**



### CLAIM WHAT'S YOURS:

Families who receive tax credits should renew their claims as soon as possible to stop the payments drying up.

## Renew your claim or lose your credits

PEOPLE who receive tax credits are being urged to renew their claims or face seeing their payments dry up.

Renewal packs are being sent to claimants and HM Revenue & Customs said it was important for them to check them as soon as possible.

"We ask people to renew their tax credits as soon as they receive their packs," said HMRC director of

benefits and credits Steve Lamey.

"They need to make sure their details are correct. The sooner they renew, the sooner we can make sure they are getting the right money. It's simple – if they don't renew their claims before July 31, payments may stop."

People who receive tax credits are also being warned that HMRC car-

ries out checks on the information it is given.

Claimants need to let HMRC know of any changes in their circumstances – including working hours, childcare costs or pay – that haven't already been reported during the past year.

There are more than 160,000 tax credit claimants in Kent.

## It's the little things that buyers notice

DON'T bother washing the car – but whatever you do, make sure the house is de-cluttered.

Many homeowners continue to have misconceptions about what to do to help sell their property, often missing the obvious and instead wasting their time on the unnecessary, according to a new report.

They may be better off listening to the advice of property valuation experts when deciding how to spend their time and money in preparation for opening their doors to potential buyers.

Instead of brewing fresh coffee and baking bread, those valuation experts said that the best single step to increase a property's chance of selling quickly, and for a healthy price, was to de-clutter.

More than half – 55pc – of property valuers said this was the number one on their list of possible jobs to improve house selling chances.

Relevant de-cluttering tasks were tidying the garden, repairing paint

**By Ed Foss**

MyMoney 24 writer

chips or wallpapering, they said in a survey by leading mortgage provider HSBC.

The research, which questioned householders and property valuation experts, also revealed the smaller jobs around the house which can help homeowners to sell their property.

While more than two thirds of homeowners thought cleaning the windows would be worthwhile, only a third of property experts agreed.

The experts, however, gave a high rating to the relatively minor idea of repainting or varnishing a front door, while homeowners did not generally think it was worthwhile.

Householders should also worry less about putting rubbish bins out of sight or washing the car, and concentrate instead on repairing old fences and gates.

Stuart Beattie, head of mortgages

at HSBC, said: "Our survey shows that many homeowners have spent the recent bank holidays making home improvements.

"While work such as replacing windows or redecorating will make your home more attractive to prospective buyers, it is often the small, last-minute jobs like painting the front door that can make all the difference.

"First impressions really do count."

Other tips for successful sales include:

■ Look at your neighbours' houses. If they look tidier than yours, that first impression has failed.

■ Don't over-improve – the buyer will probably want to put their mark on the house and new carpets for the sake of it don't always work.

■ Replace old-fashioned switches and electrical sockets – not necessarily particularly expensive, but old looking electrical switches and sockets can make an instant negative impression.



## INSIDE THIS WEEK

The East Malling Trust has contributed to five new horticultural research fellowships worth a combined total of £1.25 million over the next five years. The pot was put together in a bid to protect UK horticulture research and development from further Government funding cutbacks. A Trust spokesman called on other businesses and organisations in the industry to follow suit.

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# Osborne vows to tackle jobs and housing during Gills visit

## Simon Robinson

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CHANCELLOR George Osborne spoke of his commitment to the county during a whistlestop pre-local election push in Kent.

The Tory frontbencher met Gillingham FC's manager Andy Hessenthaler and senior squad at the team's Priestfield Stadium on Tuesday afternoon.

After a brief period out on the hallowed turf, Osborne was quizzed on his plans to encourage job creation across the county, which took a huge hit last month after its firms failed to secure a single penny in the first £450 million round of the Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF).

Just one of the Kent, Essex and East Sussex Local Enterprise Partnership's 17 applications was successful, and that was from Essex-based e2v Technologies.

But Osborne said the region was key to the country and would benefit from the London 2012 Olympics.

"The South East is an incredibly important region for the country and we are committed to some really big investments here, particularly in transport with the Crossrail development due to connect London with the Thames Gateway area," he said.

"The Olympics will also bring a lot of money to the county. But on top of that we're always looking at what more we can do for local areas, and [Medway MP] Rehman Chishti and Medway Council have been talking about what we can



**PLEDGE:** The Chancellor said he was committed to creating jobs and across the South East

do for the towns. All parts of the country need assistance in different ways, but the key here is to get transport and housing right in the South East, and making sure the jobs are here. These are our priorities."

Osborne also reassured north Kent businesses that the much-lauded Thames Gateway corridor was very much in the Conservatives' plans.

He said: "We are still very committed to the Thames Gateway region, and the Olympics is

the centrepiece of that project. But even though we've had to sort out the mess we inherited, I think we've been able to do that while keeping the key components of the TG project.

"I was talking to Michael Heseltine about this the other day, as he had the original vision for the project. We both agreed it was one of the most important projects in the whole of the country, and that the Olympics and high-speed rail create an opportunity to take the region into the 21st century."

Last month Kent County Council leader Paul Carter spoke of his disappointment that Kent had been overlooked by the RGF panel but that Government was beginning to recognise that the South East was not entirely prosperous and certain to deliver growth.

"I think the message is slowly getting through, but it was Michael Heseltine and others whose job it was to sift through the Regional Growth Fund applications, and Nick Clegg who made the final decision. So no matter what other ministers want to do, it's the panel that will decide," Cllr Carter said.

"Disappointed would not be the right word because I was not very optimistic bearing in mind the noises from certain people in the Government that the South East would not be a significant recipient of the fund.

"But just because it sees us as having a prosperous economy does not mean we shouldn't have an even more prosperous economy."

Cllr Carter said he was hopeful Kent would fare better when the second round of funding, worth about £1 billion, was announced this summer.

## FINANCE

### Law firm to lead debt recovery day

A WORKSHOP will take place next month, giving businesses the tools to get tough with their debtors.

The one-day event is being held at the Marriott Tudor Park Hotel, Maidstone, and has been co-organised by law firm Furley Page and the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.

Furley Page debt recovery and insolvency boss Martin Kingman, based in Chatham, said: "Times have been hard and with companies taking longer to pay, it is crucial that businesses have an appropriate debt recovery procedure agreed and in place.

"Businesses who attend this workshop will be shown that provided they have the right safeguards built into their systems, they can prevent problems with debtors."

The Thursday, June 16 workshop costs £30 to non-Chamber members and is particularly aimed at credit controllers and financial directors.

For more information, call the Chamber on 01233 503838 or book online at [www.kentinvictachamber.com](http://www.kentinvictachamber.com).

## WELFARE

### Fit to work figures prompt reforms

THREE out of four recent sickness benefit applicants were found to be fit for work, Government figures have revealed.

The statistics showed 887,300 healthy employees attempted to get their hands on taxpayers' cash between 2008 and 2010.

Of those, 39 per cent were deemed 'fit for work' while a further 36 per cent abandoned their claim before their medical assessment was complete – suggesting they knew it would be thrown out. The shock figures were taken from 1,175,000 new Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) applicants during a 22-month period.

Employment Minister Chris Grayling said: "Once again we have clear evidence of the need for change in our welfare system. That's why we are reassessing all of those claimants.

"We will, of course, carry on providing unconditional support to those who cannot work, but for those who can it's right and proper that they start back on the road to employment."



**REFORM:** Tory MP Chris Grayling

## ENTREPRENEURS

### School enterprise will help start-ups

SOUTH East entrepreneurs have cited the creation of more school enterprise courses as the most important factor of securing the next generation of successful solo start-ups.

Almost two in five (39 per cent) of the region's entrepreneurs listed such educational enterprise ventures as their top priority, when questioned by Coutts.

The creation of entrepreneurial apprentices and more positive stories around entrepreneurs as role models came in second and third place with 29 and 13 per cent, respectively.

Coutts' South East managing partner Andy Rymer said: "What's important is to get real-life entrepreneurs and business owners together with school pupils and students to help set up apprenticeships and mentoring schemes to grow the sector. StartUp Britain has been building such connections.

"Our own research shows the top personal traits attributed to entrepreneurs' success as business owners are perseverance, passion and ambition."

## COMMENT

POLITICAL commentators may question the effectiveness of Chancellor George Osborne's visit to Gillingham FC's Priestfield Stadium this week, being as he spoke with only the vice-chairman, manager, senior players and a handful of local reporters.

And sports commentators may question his timing, what with his Tatton constituency's close proximity to Macclesfield FC, who humbled the Gills on their own patch just four days previous.

But away from the worlds of local elections and League Two football clubs, Osborne hinted that Pfizer's site may soon be converted into one of the Government's new Enterprise Zones (EZ).

While refusing to be drawn directly on the issue, the Chancellor said the unwanted research and development site in Sandwich was suitable for an EZ and that he recognised the effects Pfizer's withdrawal would have on the county, including issues such as initial job losses and the migration of skilled workers elsewhere.

It is encouraging that he understands the importance of incentivising businesses to fill the void created by Pfizer.

Time will tell if Osborne's hint proves telling or if the Government has another home in mind for Kent, East Sussex and Essex Local Enterprise Partnership's EZ.

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**Osborne hinted that Pfizer's site may soon become an Enterprise Zone**



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# Horticultural research set to blossom thanks to £1.25 million fund

**By Simon Robinson**

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RESEARCH fellowships worth a total of £1.25 million have been handed out to five leading horticultural academics.

The five-year funding has been made available thanks to a collaboration between the East Malling Trust (EMT), Horticultural Development Company (HDC) and the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA).

EMT chairman said it was vital that the private sector stepped in to support UK horticulture research and development and called on other organisations and businesses to do the same.

"It is feared that public funding cutbacks are undermining research, which is essential for the industry if it is to remain competitive in a global marketplace," he said.

"Furthermore, the UK as a whole needs the industry to ensure a viable future for food production and to provide the social, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing benefits from plants and the landscape.

"These Fellowships are enabling our industry to develop nationally significant work, and to facilitate the employment and mentoring of a new generation of science specialists."

Awards were presented to scientists and academics at East Malling Research (EMR), ADAS, Harper Adams and Stockbridge Technology Centre (STC) on Thursday, April 28.

EMR will use the funding to appoint a trainee researcher in plant pathology and crop protection, while ornamentals expertise will be strengthened at STC.

Two young entomologists will be trained and mentored at ADAS, initially focusing on integrated pest management research. ADAS will also develop



**FELLOWSHIPS:** Academics and scientists have been awarded £1.25 million funding

horticultural weeds expertise that would otherwise soon disappear.

HDC chairman Neil Bragg said: "The awards are essential to ensure that we support the future development of essential applied scientists and to ensure that the work and experience of the existing scientists is not lost but developed for the future.

"The Fellowships have been made to try to cover essential skills which are threatened at present, such as weeds science, entomology, and ornamentals research. The collaboration between EMT, HDC & HTA is hopefully a model which other groups can follow or add to for the future."

David Gwyther, HTA Director Gener-

al, said: "Outside of limited funds from the HDC the ornamentals sector has virtually no other support for applied research. The industry had to act now to prevent further decline and I am delighted that many of these fellowships will directly benefit the ornamentals industry."

The awarding of the five Fellowships follows an agreement signed between EMT, HDC and HTA at Fruit Focus 2010, held at EMR.

The partners have also agreed to support a number of unsuccessful Fellowship application projects to submit bids for funding from BBSRC, Technology Strategy Board, or HDC cross-panel funding.



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## Cutting concern: can Government's Red Tape challenge website help to chop regulations?

THE Government's online regulation-cutting campaign continues to divide opinion across the county.

Prime Minister David Cameron's Red Tape Challenge site calls on business leaders to flag up the rules that are stifling growth, with a view to scrapping thousands of unnecessary regulations.

Some Kent businesses have questioned the Government's ability to cut EU-imposed red tape, while others have welcomed the initiative.

The Marketing Eye's managing director Neil Edwards said: "The Red Tape Challenge is popularity politics of the worst order and reeks of civil servants advising ministers on how to win the hearts of business owners, without the first idea of what it's like to run a small business.

"If they think business owners come into work every day worrying about one regulation or another, they are on another planet. It is liquidity; access to finance; the cost of employing people

and where the next order is coming from that keeps us awake, not which returns to complete.

"The taxpayer is now the proud owner of a shiny new website that allows us 'to tell [Government] which regulations are working and which are not; what should be scrapped, what should be saved and what should be simplified'.

"Then, further on, 'once you've had your say, ministers will have three months to work out which regulations they want to

keep and why'. Democracy, hey, you couldn't make it up."

But CooperBurnett Partner Victoria Sampson was in favour of the online drive, saying: "I welcome the website and, in particular, the burden on ministers to be required to make a very good case for onerous regulations to stay.

"I also welcome the Government's engagement with the public as it is they who are at the actual coal face dealing with over-regulation each day."

# High-spec medical manufacturer looks forward a to healthy future

ITL's chief executive Tom Cole has his sights set on the Germans.

The qualified electronics engineer said the high-spec medical diagnostic instrumentation design and manufacturing company wanted to move into new markets, including Germany, where their nearest European rivals operate.

The bold move is part of ITL's plans to build upon their title of the UK's number one firm in the field, and will also see them move into India as well as further develop its Chinese arm, used for high volume production as well as distribution and warehousing.

Mr Cole and his marketing director, Dr Greg Smith, will be leading a delegation to India to find distributors for their own products in this growing market place. Building a UK-India relationship is among their top priorities.

Cole said the company, which offers an unrivalled one-stop shop approach to the design and manufacture of some of the latest cutting edge medical equipment, was perfectly placed to expand.

He said: "There are businesses that design products and there are those that manufacture them. What we can do is take a product through from its initial conception through to manufacturing. It's definitely one of our unique selling points because our customers can come in with just a drawing on the back of a cigarette packet and we will take it through the design, prototyping, manufacturing and commercialisation processes.

"In the UK we're number one because we're the only company that does what we do. Within 12 months of that idea coming to us the client will be able to take a world class product to market. We guarantee that."

The company, based in Ellingham Way, Ashford, was established 35 years ago and has grown into a streamlined machine.

The 75 on-site staff are split between research and design and manufacturing departments.

Currently the company is working on 10 new products at the R&D stage while producing a further 20 on the shop floor.

Inside the firm's long, narrow boardroom Cole fanned out a number of promotional pamphlets for a range of high-tech medical products his company has built or designed, or both, in recent years.

He also pointed to a stylish piece of machinery

## The BIG Interview

Integrated Technologies Limited is the name behind the biggest brands in medical diagnostic instrumentation. Chief executive Tom Cole told Business Week editor **Simon Robinson** how the established Ashford firm is called upon to bring cutting-edge products to market, at times taking them from initial concept right through to mass manufacture and distribution



sitting on a desk at the end of the room. His team had been asked to re-work the product, which had been 'completed' by a Singapore rival – and was as big as a dining room table when they got their hands on it.

A major overhaul later and the sleek unit was a third of its former size.

Cole said his company's first class reputation and associated successes – such as those in front of me – were largely thanks to his highly-skilled staff.

"It's a team effort," he said. "No one person in this organisation can work in isolation. The team must work together. The reason that works so well is that most people here have worked together for so long. Most of our engineers have been with the company for 20 to 25 years and I think that's because we give them such a wide range of life-saving products to work on."

"We didn't realise how good our engineers were until we compared them with others around the world. It's only when you put them up against engineers in China and the US that you see we're in a different league entirely."

"I think the reason we're such a cut above is that our engineers are very commercially minded and very practical; they get the job done in nine to 12 months. And we pride ourselves on never having any product returns – that's why we get repeat customers."

Cole said the company's customer attention to aftercare was also part of their success in retaining clients.

He said: "We always keep in contact with the customer once we've designed and manufactured their product because we want to know how sales are going and what the feedback from users has been so we can make any necessary improvements."

"It's a continuous process, we don't just make an item and then forget about it. We want to enhance it so that the customer keeps coming back to us."

Another factor in ITL's rise to the top of the UK market is its security in diversity.

Cole explained: "Last year there were tough times for the manufacturing industry because of the recession. Our customer had too much stock on finished instruments and were unable to move them on as the market had slowed down."

"But rather than standing still, they switched their focus to innovation and the next generation of products."

"So rather than spending money with us on manufacturing they spent money with us on R&D. We're predicting growth of about 20 per cent in the next year and hope to take turnover up from £8 million to £10 million."

Finances aside, it is clear that Cole places equal value on the positive role the products they work on are having across the globe.

"It's a fantastic industry to be involved in," he said.

"Everyone likes to help save lives. If you think you're contributing to putting world class products into the market that are going to be able to help people, such as a machine that helps diagnose breast cancer earlier, that brings us a lot of joy."

ITL are going to come up with innovations in new products, services and ways of doing business that will help get the economy going again.



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**IT'S A TEAM EFFORT:** The 75-strong ITL workforce outside their Ashford office in Ellingham Way

TAX

## New framework for filing fines

SOLE traders and partners are set to face new penalties for filing their tax returns late.

The new system, introduced by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, will see an initial £100 fixed penalty issued to those who are even one day late in filling out the necessary paperwork, while those who are three months late will face additional fine of £10 per day, until the return is filed, for a maximum of 90 days.

Reeves senior tax manager Nigel Moon said: "For tax returns up to 2009/10 the rules effectively capped a late filing penalty at the amount of tax unpaid at January 31, and we have used this rule on our clients' behalf to good effect where returns have been unavoidably delayed.

"However, we will find this route blocked in the future as a new penalties regime will now apply to any late tax return for 2010/11 onwards.

"Under the new system taxpayers who have not filed within six months of the filing date will face a minimum penalty of £1,300 increasing to £1,600 if they are 12 months late.

"In addition, there may be tax geared penalties for late submission - and further tax geared penalties if tax is paid late."

IMPORTS

## Entrance point to England

KENT'S business connections with the Continent are set to be boosted by a new multi-million-pound development.

The planned Calais Premier park will be built across 160 hectares in the industrial zone of Turquerie, which stretches along the Calais-Dunkirk railway line and is situated between Calais Port and the Channel Tunnel.

The first phase of the project will see logistics warehouses, industrial parks and commercial properties built on 50 hectares.

Calais business bosses will also invest £1.8 million in a new railway junction at the site and upgrades on the whole Calais-Dunkirk line.

The £350 million Calais 2015 Port Project will extend the port to twice its size.

The myriad of developments has been coordinated to provide a direct entrance point to England from Europe.

Accordingly, contact has been made with potential UK clients, including suppliers in the automobile industry and mass-market suppliers.

The mayor of Calais, Natacha Bouchart, said: "With this project, Calais will assert its strategic position as a European crossroads, create thousands of jobs and bring in million of pounds of investment."

# Investees' attitude goes from 'when' to 'how' as perceptions change

Simon Robinson

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THE county's private-equity outlook remains positive despite public sector spending cuts, according to the Matrix Group.

Jonathan Gregory, Partner at Matrix Private Equity Partners (MPEP) said the market would favour "businesses of the highest quality" in the next six months.

He said: "We have experienced a notable increase in investment driven by a change in the mindset of owners who have moved from thinking about 'when' to 'how' they can realise the value of their business.

"Perceptions of business owners in Kent have changed due to the benefits of the benign capital taxes regime in comparison to the issues associated with the income tax system. Also there is a realisation that valuation prices are unlikely to increase significantly in the short or even medium term.

"Kent is well positioned to weather the consequences of public sector spending cuts, benefiting from low interest rates and the weaker pound. We are seeing that our investee companies based in the county are reflecting this through exceptionally strong performance.

"However even in Kent only those businesses of the highest quality will be able to command premium prices and the weaker players will struggle to attract investment or bank debt."



**POSITIVE:** Private equity expert Jonathan Gregory said Kent's leading firms would blossom in the current market while "weaker" players would find it difficult to attract investment but the outlook of the private equity market was good

Matrix has been very active on the investment trail, having completed three deals in the last two months alone - the £8.5 million management buyout (MBO) of printing business Automated Systems Group Ltd, the £9 million MBO of European recruitment provider RDL Corporation and the £4.5 million MBO of Kent based publishing business Faversham House.

The firm is now looking for strong players operating in niche businesses that have significant opportunities for growth.

But deals have been hindered by a lack of cash flow finance.

Gregory said: "The availability of bank debt is mixed. For the larger transactions (north of £10 million), there does seem to be more appetite this year, however in the sub £10 million bracket the situation is much more varied particularly in relation to cash flow lending.

"In order to address the lack of cash flow finance for smaller businesses we provide the debt ourselves, as part of an overall funding package that gives greater deliverability and certainty to the vendor.

"There is much more flexibility from vendors with regards to how their consideration is paid; an increase in vendor loans being used in order that the seller can benefit from better interest rates than offered on bank deposits and a rise in vendors taking small equity stakes in order to benefit from future potential valuation uplifts.

"The exit environment is looking promising and there is growing interest from overseas buyers who perceive that UK businesses are looking relatively cheap. There is strong competition for new deals as private equity investors have significant levels of funds to deploy.

"We expect our portfolio companies to benefit from particularly strong demand in the mid-market, from private equity houses that have very high levels of liquidity and need to invest their funds in the next few years."

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## 'Backbone of the business' is in line for luxury Prague getaway

TOP PA Sharon Walsh is in the running for a five-night city break after reaching the final in a national assistant competition.

Sharon, from Eynsford, near Dartford, is one of just six PAs in line for the top prize - a holiday in Prague.

The executive assistant to the HR director at Channel 4 said she was delighted to reach the finals in the PA of the Year Award.

"I am thrilled to have been named as one of the UK's top PAs," she said. "People often don't realise the impact PAs can have on an organisation.

"I have been an assistant for many years now and it's absolutely great to have my hard work and input recognised."

The award has been sponsored by Hays Recruitment and The Times.

Hays PA and Secretarial managing director Geoff Sims said: "PAs like

Sharon make a huge contribution to organisations and there is often not enough acknowledgement for people in these important support roles who keep the wheels of business turning and are the backbone of their business."

The winner will be announced by Ultimo founder Michelle Mone on Thursday, May 19. "These six finalists all share a proactive and adaptable spirit I can easily relate to. As someone who has built up her own business, I know how vital it is to have a strong team around you," said Ms Mone.

"People often do not appreciate just how demanding the role of PA is, and how significant their contribution to an organisation is, so it's great that six of the nation's best have been sought out.

"I wish the best of luck to all the talented final six ahead of the award announcement."



**FINALIST:** Sharon Walsh

# Beat the burglars when you lock your front door

By Simon Robinson

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AGEAS Insurance's latest research has provided an insight into why domestic burglaries are on the rise.

Figures collated by the insurance giant revealed that just under one in two adults (47 per cent) do not lock their front door as a rule when they are at home.

More than one in ten (13 per cent) only ever lock their front door at bedtime.

Ageas also found that homes across the UK display on average £1,223 of valuables such as TV's, other electronic goods, antiques and works of art that are clearly visible for would-be burglars to see through home windows.

Nearly one in five residents (18 per cent) said that as much as £2,000 or more worth of valuables could be seen by a passer-by looking through a window and one in three (35 per cent) said that valuables worth more than £1,000 could be seen.

Ageas Insurance managing director Mark Cliff said: "It is often wrongly assumed that many household burglaries are committed while homes are empty. Canny burglars know that many people assume that by being at home, they themselves are a deterrent and so they take fewer precautions.

"But an unlocked front door or window can be an open invitation to a burglar while the occupier is distracted by spend-



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**If you can gain entry, a burglar will be inside a lot faster than you**

ROY RUDHAM

**BREAKING IN:** The fact that you're inside your home will not deter a burglar from making the most of an opportunity to steal

ing time in the garden.

"With so few people routinely securing their home while they are there it's no wonder that so many thefts are committed without a forced entry.

"It is not about turning your home into a fortress but simply getting into the habit of locking doors and windows, regardless of the period of time the house or room is unattended."

Roy Rudham, Chairman

of UK Neighbourhood Watch Trust, which gets 15,000 visits to its website each day added: "People should treat their homes like they treat their cars – do not leave valuables on show, lock the doors and make sure you are insured.

"If you were to lock your home how easy would it be for you to get in? If you can easily gain entry, a burglar will be inside a lot faster than you."

## PM: There's no sense in Europe's single sex insurance premiums

PRIME Minister David Cameron has accused the European Court of Justice of lacking "common sense" after it ruled that car insurers cannot charge men and women different premiums based on gender.

Mr Cameron hit out at the controversial ruling, made last month, arguing that premiums should be based on risk.

He also derided the supporters of the move as the "loony left".

But the ECJ said the existing ruling was unfair



ACCUSED: David Cameron

and needed to be turned on its head.

A statement read: "Taking the gender of the insured individual into account as a risk factor in insurance contracts constitutes discrimination."

The ECJ's decision means insurers can no longer charge lower car insurance to women than men.

The cost of buying a pensions annuity is also set to change.

The PM said he was less than impressed with the ECJ's decision.

"I have to say it [the ruling] shows that some of the loony left is still alive and well in our country because frankly insurance premiums ought to reflect risk," he said.

And in addressing Tory Jonathan Evans, MP for Cardiff North, who raised the issue in Parliament, Mr Cameron added: "You, as ever, are displaying common sense whereas the European Court did not."

Unisex insurance premiums are to come into force in December next year.

### RECESSION

## Slowdown comes out as top concern

THE economic slowdown has been listed as the greatest threat to global business leaders, Aon has found.

The insurance broker found that the continuing fallout from the recession was their number one concern.

Of the 1,000 business leaders surveyed across 58 countries 67 per cent said that had suffered a loss of income associated with this risk.

Failure to innovate/meet customer needs, technology failure and an inability to attract/retain top talent were among the top 10 concerns.

Rory Moloney, head of risk consulting in Europe, said: "In the UK and Ireland, businesses are acutely aware of the uncertainty surrounding the financial stability of European nations, which is most likely the reason we see political risks and exchange rate fluctuations in their top 10 concerns.

"This survey was conducted prior to the upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the New Zealand and Japan earthquakes, so it is possible these concerns would be even higher on the list today."

George Zsolnay, head of Aon Analytics in the US, said: "The findings shared in our report underscore the undeniable interdependence among various risks as well as economies around the globe. It is more important than ever for organisations to embrace an enterprise-wide approach to managing risk, and optimise their strategy on a global basis."



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## Skills festival is first of its kind for careers guidance

STUDENTS from Romney Marsh, Ashford and Shepway are discovering the wealth of career opportunities available to them at the first Romney Marsh Skills Festival.

The two-day event, which ends on Saturday (May 7) at the Marsh Academy, focuses on the rural economy, energy and engineering, construction, IT and telecoms, fashion, and marine and maritime industries.

More than 600 students have been taking part in a wide range of hands-on activities and masterclasses, including masonry, timber-framing and even robot programming.

Marsh Academy chairman of governors Robert Alston said: "It is especially important that parents and children have an awareness of the range and kinds of careers potentially open to them, and of the educational paths involved when selecting their options.

"The Marsh Academy is very excited to host the Romney Marsh Skills Festival – the first of its kind in Kent – which will help not only our students but young people from across the area to make the best choices for their futures.

"We hope it will be the first of many."

The event, which was officially launched at the House of Lords earlier this year, has been organised by Kent County Council in partnership with the Marsh Academy and the City of London Livery Companies, with support from Hadlow College.

Those in attendance were also offered advice on apprenticeships and self-employment.

## Date set for next apprentice week

THE next National Apprenticeship Week will take place from Monday, February 6, to Friday, February 10 next year.

More than 500 events were held across the UK for the last event, the aim of which was to engage employers with apprenticeship programmes by highlighting the advantages of taking on and supporting apprentices in the workplace.

Visit [www.apprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.co.uk).

# Green scheme ahead for former museum?



**HISTORIC:** Ramsgate's East Cliff Hall could be turned into a hothouse for the eco-friendly employers of Thanet's future

**By Steve Knight**

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A FORMER motor museum in Ramsgate could be about to start a new life as a hothouse for eco-friendly entrepreneurs.

The West Cliff Hall has remained empty since the classic cars it once housed were all removed in 2004, but a group of local businessmen and women now hope to re-open the historic venue to aid in Thanet's economic recovery.

They plan to use the hall to help young entrepreneurs develop the skills, confidence and contacts to become the isle's employers of the future, and to seize opportunities presented by the low-carbon economy in east Kent.

If the proposals get the go-ahead, they will also be involved in the running of a low-carbon venue that includes offices, a theatre, restaurant, gallery, shop and independent cinema.

The project is being sponsored by the Low Carbon Community Ramsgate (LCCR) charity, the community champion of which is Austral-

ia-born Ramsgate resident Janet Fielding, who starred alongside both Tom Baker and Peter Davison in the TV series Doctor Who between 1981 and 1984.

She said: "Entrepreneurs start young. This is an excellent opportunity to help local kids with a flair for business.

"Latest figures show that not only is Thanet's unemployment the highest in Kent, Thanet wages are £83 less than they are in Canterbury and £159 less than they are in Dover districts.

"We don't just need more employment here. We need better employment and we can't rely solely on outsiders to bring it to us. We have to find ways of doing that for ourselves."

A venue for wartime dances in the 1940s, the West Cliff Hall is also fondly remembered for hosting school speech nights and even an early Rolling Stones concert in 1964.

Unoccupied and damaged by water for more than six years, LCCR estimates that it requires £5.5 million for substantial repairs before it can be brought back to life. They say leaving it to

continue to deteriorate is not an option as the roof of the hall holds up the first 40 metres of Ramsgate's West Cliff Promenade.

Members of Thanet council's ruling Conservative cabinet discussed the plans at a meeting last Thursday (April 28) when they were asked to approve a recommendation to give the charity an option on the building.

However, the councillors have asked for more financial information before making a decision.

LCCR chairman John East – also a City financier and talented jazz musician – said: "We have a real chance to make a real dent in Thanet's unemployment figures and save Ramsgate's West Cliff Hall and Gardens.

"Our next challenge is to raise the funds to make this a reality."

Other members of the LCCR board include corporate lawyer Clare Grayston (secretary), financial expert and East Cliff Residents' Association member Chris Welch (treasurer), retired architect Russell White and senior NHS managers Jane Hetherington and Sonja Bigg.

What is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working? Do you send employees on training courses to aid their personal development or run apprenticeship schemes? If you have a good news story email [steve.knight@archant.co.uk](mailto:steve.knight@archant.co.uk) or give him a call on 01303 817136.

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FREE IT courses are being run for people who want to learn or improve their computer skills.

The sessions are being run by the Online Basics team and organised by the Isle of Sheppey-based charity the Island Partnership as part of its Employ Swale scheme.

The course will include information on how to use a mouse and keyboard, how to send an email, how to search for information on the internet, how to stay safe while online and

more. A spokesman said: "Online Basics is a great way for you to get started online, helping you gain the skills and confidence you need to start using computers and the internet."

"The course is for anyone. You don't have to know anything about computers or have any experience. However, if you do it will help you practice your skills."

"Whether you're looking to develop computer and internet skills for a new job or simply

save time, money and hassle by using the internet to order your weekly shopping or pay your bills, Online Basics can help you get started."

The Island Partnership was founded in 1988 with the aim of tackling unemployment and improving the level of skills on the Isle of Sheppey.

For more information or to book an appointment with an advisor, call 01795 59670 or visit the Old Library in Trinity Road, Sheerness.

## Tiffany Pisani shows she's a model pupil

SCHOOLCHILDREN from across the county have designed outfits for Britain's Next Top Model.

Tiffany Pisani, who was crowned winner of the popular Sky Living television show in October, modelled the garments which had been designed, crafted, styled and marketed during a five-day course run by the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) in Rochester.

Inga Patching, widening participation co-ordinator at UCA, said: "The aim of the project is to find new talent in the local area, while also raising aspirations of young people that might not have thought they could pursue a career in fashion."

"Everyone has said how much they have loved the course, including Britain's Next Top Model, Tiffany Pisani, who told me she wished she could have done a project like this when she was younger."

The outreach project, which took place between Friday, April 15, and Thursday, April 21, gave 31 fashion wannabes the opportunity to experience university-style lessons with some of UCA's lecturers, technicians and current students.

Mrs Patching added: "They learn practical and theoretical skills that are vital for the world of fashion, such as sketching, pattern-cutting, sewing and promotion, plus their hard work is captured in a portfolio which they can show future employers and add to their CV."

Katie Jarvis, 17, from Thomas Aveling School,



**BEAUTY:** Tiffany Pisani with two of her designers

Rochester, said: "I've done some fashion work at school but I've learned so much more during this project – it's a great opportunity to find out what university is like and see if it is for you."

Paige Harrison, 17, who attends Folkestone Academy, added: "I didn't know if I wanted to do fashion design or fashion journalism, but the course has made me realise that my passion is actually in designing clothes – and when Britain's Next Top Model says she'd like to wear your dress for an event, you know you're doing something right."

## 'Visual merchandising' students boosted by Royal Wedding designs

VISUAL merchandising students from North West Kent College have been putting their skills to good use to help small businesses in Sevenoaks.

Caroline Russell, Janette Susans, Karen Chappell and Rachel Taylor have recently passed their exams in the subject and installed four window displays for Sashani the jewellers.

Its owner Philip Chown had met Janette, 21, at a business masterclass and invited her to

design the sweets-themed designs for his shop.

Janette said: "I loved being able to work on a real shop window and put the theory I have learned at Bluewater's Learning Shop into practice."

Fellow shopkeeper and wedding dress designer Bea Das was so impressed by the Sashani display that she approached the students' tutor Laura Lewis about doing one for her shop based on the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate

Middleton – now known as the Duchess of Cambridge.

The display has been designed around the theme of a vintage tea party and celebrates the Britishness of the Royal Family.

Ms Lewis said: "Despite the short notice it was too exciting an opportunity to turn down."

"Who knows when the next royal wedding of this scale might be?"

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[www.gmlconstruction.co.uk](http://www.gmlconstruction.co.uk)  
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**PAGE 62**



## VILLAGE PEOPLE

Collectively-owned pub benefits from the skills of talented chef

**PAGE 47**

# Kent Weekend

## Back to basics

Keith James celebrates the genius of Leonard Cohen

TURN TO PAGE 43

**PLUS:** Death and why it's possibly the most taboo subject of all - **talking point p44** And after death out come the castle ghosts who would very much like to meet you - **exhibitions and events p55** Subaru's functional Forester keeps style with the performance - **driving p73**



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**K**EITH James's artistic reinterpretations have spanned the melodies of the New York folk revival and the poetry of the Spanish surrealist movement – and, what's more, they have proved popular with audiences.

His stripping back of the songs of Leonard Cohen to, in his words, "present the songs in their most naked form", is the latest incarnation of this.

"I've always been a sworn fan of his and something struck me. As he went through his career, the production became, to me, more and more at odds with the words," said James.

"If you listen to his early work, there was a tiny bit of production, but as he went on, his albums became more synthetic. And yet the intrinsic value of the songs was utterly brilliant, as it had always been."

James believes it's this lyrical brilliance that makes Cohen's work worthy of the attention it still receives.

He said: "This tour, from the point of view of interest and attendance, is certainly going better than anything I've ever done... it's his lyrics – they're absolutely fantastic."

"During the course of concerts, songs that started life as poems are the ones that make people just sit and have goose-bumps. Songs like Famous Blue Raincoat, Chelsea Hotel and Suzanne, which are all fairly early songs and as bare as they could ever be."

James is drawn to the simple nature of these songs because of their authenticity.

"They come from an era when there was a tremendous amount of thought process going into song-writing. People were writing with no aid whatsoever aside from the instrument they had, the era they lived in and little else."

"In the 60s, Canadian and American artists' work demonstrated their reverence for life, freedom and their new take on everything to do with government and the Cold War and Vietnam. There was a huge amount of freedom of lyric and a great amount of wholesome music."

For James, the attraction of the 60s folk revolution is due to the artists' dedication to their work.

He said: "When a person can immerse themselves almost to the point of desolation in their writing, with a disregard for self, I think that brings out absolutely fantastic writing and also a tremendous amount of humility."

"That's something we don't have these days. You know, everybody's got four of everything. So how can we write about any part of life being

## Hallelujah for Cohen

Guitarist and singer Keith James talks to **Ed Hill** about the lyrical brilliance of singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen and how he aims to reinterpret the Canadian maestro's work on his latest tour

missing, or deprived, or fragile? Most people don't reach that state of mind very often."

The guitarist and singer turned to music after becoming disillusioned with the commercial world.

He said: "Music's always been a big part of my life. I've never really had a proper job. I could possibly trace it all back to my school band and the first time we played a gig."

"When I left school I didn't go straight into music, I went into design and marketing in the fashion industry for about three years. I became fairly disillusioned with that and then started performing on the wine-bar circuit and had some fairly immediate success."

After recording and performing his own songs, James stumbled across the work of Spanish modernist poet Federico Garcia Lorca, which in turn led him to reinterpret Cohen's

work. "I heard a poem by Pablo Neruda being recited on Radio Four and I went to the Albion Bookshop in Broadstairs to buy a book of his poetry," he said. "They didn't have anything, although they did have work by Lorca. I bought that book instead as the poets shared an affection for one another's work."

"Not very long after that, I went to Andalucía on holiday and I did as much research as I could about Lorca. I went to all the museums, his birthplace and where he was executed."

Through his research came the idea of a musical reinterpretation of Lorca's poetry.

He said: "I fell in love with his poetry and I then realised the intrinsic link between Lorca and Cohen. I can now hear in a great deal of Cohen's work the influence of Lorca. Take This Waltz is the Lorca poem Little Viennese Waltz set to music. Cohen translated it himself."

Cohen's practice of setting Lorca's poetry to music will feature in the current tour and inform James's future plans.

He said: "I'm planning a tour called Duende, a curious word which doesn't really translate into English, featuring the poetry of Pablo Neruda and Lorca and the Brazilian poet Chico Buarque and setting it to music. The origins of the word Duende are in flamenco and it will be mainly based on classical and flamenco guitar."

The success of the current tour has ensured that James's year will revolve around the songs of Leonard Cohen.

■ Keith James is at the St Mary's Arts Centre, Sandwich, on Saturday, May 21, at 8pm. To buy tickets, phone 01304 611600/620404 or visit [www.stmarysartscentre.org.uk](http://www.stmarysartscentre.org.uk). He is also at the Trinity Arts Theatre in Tunbridge Wells on Friday, June 17.



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**D**EATH and dying have hit the headlines after it emerged that the BBC is to screen the final moments of a terminally ill man. The broadcaster's decision has sparked controversy and debate about whether it is acceptable to show 'real' death on television.

Like birth, death is a natural and inescapable part of life, so why is showing it such a contentious issue? After all, we are used to seeing the intimacy and emotion of 'real' birth on TV. Are we afraid to confront the reality of life ending?

The man who features in the scientific series *Inside the Human Body*, 84-year-old Gerald, was a patient at Hospice in the Weald in Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells. The chief executive at the palliative care centre, Rob Woolley, has welcomed the debate about death and dying that news of the programme has brought.

Meanwhile, Vivienne Pattison, the director of the Ashford-based pressure group Mediawatch UK, which campaigns for family values in the media, said the idea of screening the death made her feel "uneasy", but she was not "jumping up and down" about it like the recent "one-sided" coverage of euthanasia.

Both agreed that our unease about seeing death has developed fairly recently, because about 100 years ago, when people died in their homes and open casket wakes were still popular, it would have been all around us.

Mr Woolley said: "There has been a societal change in the way we talk about death and dying. There is an argument that we've over-medicalised death. Acute hospitals and medical professionals – all they want to do is save lives and when they cannot, it becomes difficult for them.

"Hospitals are a great place for doctors and diagnoses, but when we are going to die they are not a great place to go for end-of-life care."

Death has been shown on television before, and in 1998, a scientific BBC programme called *The Human Body* broadcast the final breaths of a man with cancer.

But Mr Woolley said he was surprised about the subject matter when the BBC approached him about their recent programme because it was controversial.

After long discussions about the ethical and moral issues, the hospice asked patients and their families if they wanted to take part. Once they were reassured about how the issues were being handled, Mr Woolley said: "In common with other hospices, we want there to be a more open and honest discussion about death and dying.

"Obviously it was the patient's and his family's choice whether to take part, but we did want to play a role in there being more discussion about death and dying."

Gerald, who had cancer, died on January 1, surrounded by his family.

He said he hoped filming his death would help others. He said: "I don't want to die, but pretty evidently unless some miracle happens, I ain't gonna be here very long... I'm not frightened."

Ms Pattison saw a difference between screening the natural death of Gerald and the BBC programme that filmed a man dying at a Dignitas clinic, that saw it accused of being a "cheerleader for assisted suicide".

"It is slightly different. This one is part of a scientific series, that is the way they are justifying it," she said. "I would say I feel uneasy about it."

"I'm not jumping up and down and I'm sure it is going to be done in a wonderful way, but there is still this sense of unease about these moments being filmed. It is all to do with taboos... it is an incredibly personal moment."

She said the pressure group was not pro or

**As the BBC prepares to show the final moments of a man dying from cancer, Jenna Pudelek asks why the subject is still taboo**

# WHY SHOULDN'T WE TALK ABOUT DEATH?

“““

**I would say I feel uneasy about it. There is still a sense of unease about these moments being filmed, it is all to do with taboos... it is an incredibly personal moment**

VIVIENNE PATTISON,  
MEDIAWATCH UK



anti euthanasia, but was concerned that there were a lot of 'pro' programmes.

Asked if there was a concern that death on TV would become normalised, she said: "I hope it does not, and I hope it is treated with respect."

Presenter of *Inside the Human Body*, Michael Mosely, told the *Radio Times* he believed it was important not to avoid talking about death.

"I think there is a case to be made for filming a peaceful, natural death – a view shared by many who work closely with the dying."

Mr Woolley and staff at the hospice know firsthand the importance of talking about dying.

"As a hospice we see the fall-out for carers,



family members and friends if there is not a discussion," he said. "We see the impact on people psychologically and their problems facing grief."

"There needs to be an open and honest discussion and that is particularly true with children."

"It can cause all kinds of mental health problems if there is no discussion about dying."

He said society devoted so much time talking about pregnancy and birthing plans, but no one wants to mention end-of-life care.

"Wills are about money, possessions and funeral costs, not about how people want to die," he said. "That is a big issue for us, all of us."

This is because people are not ending their lives the way they want. A study by the independent think-tank Demos found that two thirds of people want to die in their own home, but by 2030 it is estimated that only one in 10 will achieve this.

Mr Woolley used an example of a man who got in touch with the hospice to say his father needed to come in, but as he had not discussed his diagnosis, could they not mention it was a hospice.

"People try to hide it with the best intentions, but it does not help."

## FINAL TABOO:

Presenter of *Inside the Human Body*, Michael Mosely, believes it is important to talk about death and dying. Below, Rob Woolley, chief executive of Hospice in the Weald, and Vivienne Pattison, of Mediawatch UK

## HAVE YOUR SAY...

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# KENT REMEMBERED



**WHAT A STORY:** Top left: Count Louis Zborowski and Ian Fleming with the car that inspired a book and then film. Below left is the Count's former home, Highland Court. The film, as advertised above, tells a very different story to the book



## The real Chitty Chitty Bang Bang still lives

By Nick Ames

nick.ames@archant.co.uk

NEXT week in an auction house in Los Angeles one of the most famous cars in movie history goes on sale.

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, complete with silver bodywork and red-and-yellow wings, could fetch up to \$2 million.

But – minus the wings and painted in British racing green – Chitty Chitty Bang Bang really did exist, in three different versions.

Powered by engines originally constructed for Zeppelin airships and designed by millionaire racing driver Louis Zborowski, who lived at Highland Court, Patricxbourne, near Canterbury, the first won two races and was capable of speeds of up to 120 mph.

One was then bought by the two sons of Sherlock Holmes writer Arthur Conan Doyle and eventually broken up.

The second was driven across the Sahara Desert by the Count and his friends before his death in a crash in the Italian Grand Prix in Monza. It was later bought by a man named Bill Hollis from Temple Ewell for £300 and a Hillman Minx.

He sold it on in the 1960s to an American collector for £16,500, who had it displayed at a museum in Cleveland, Ohio. It was loaned to the motor museum at Beaulieu in 1992, before finding a permanent home in the private collection of Bob Bahre at his Paris Hill, Maine residence – the former mansion of Hannibal Hamelin.



**GHOST ROAD:** Chitty can apparently be heard at night

Abraham Lincoln's first Vice President

The fate of the third car is uncertain but according to rumours it lies buried in a small cave somewhere in the grounds of Highland Court.

Many attempts have been made to locate it – but so far none have been successful

During his time at the house Count Zborowski, the son of a Polish nobleman and an American woman, made the acquaintance of James Bond's creator Ian Fleming, who lived just down the A2 at St Margaret's-at-Cliffe.

Fleming became fascinated with the Count and his cars and wrote his children's story Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, featuring inventor Caractacus Potts and Truly Scrumptious – a name supposed to parody Bond heroines such as Pussy Galore and Honeychile Rider.

The film, which has a story

totally unlike the book, was released in 1968 and a remake is currently being prepared.

In reality the Count – who also started the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway – built the first Chitty in 1920 with the assistance of an engineer named Captain Clive Gallop. It was a chain-driven Mercedes chassis fitted with a 23 litre Maybach aero engine. At the Esater meeting at Brookland Race Track it recorded a win in the Short Handicap with a speed of 100.75 mph.

In 1921 Chitty II was being built and it only raced once. However the Count used it as a day-to-day road car and one of his favourite routes for putting his foot down and opening up the throttle was a straight stretch of road between Bridge and Patricxbourne now spanned by the A2 bridge. It is this piece of highway which has given rise to a further legend concerning the car.

Local folklore says that the roar of the 230hp Benz BZ IV aero engine can still be heard and the car – with the ghostly goggled figure of the Count at the wheel – can still be seen on some dark nights.

The spectral vehicle is then heard driving up to the front of the old mansion, before the sound stops as if someone is getting out. The engines are then heard again receding into the distance.

Just after the halt, according to the story, the door to a part of the house called The Green Room flies open – even if it has been left locked.

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# Chef's bid to make good on villagers' investment

**W**HEN chef Richard Bayliss came to the Farriers Arms in Mersham he knew it would be no ordinary job interview. The pub, which had been neglected for months, had been taken over by a group of villagers who were now shareholders in a new business.

Richard said: "I was a bit suspicious because I thought the directors might just want pub food, but when we sat down they said to me it's your baby, you can do what you want."

The shareholders had contributed money, time and labour to refurbish the pub and had added a new restaurant called The Anvil in which the head chef could make his mark.

He said: "There was a mixed view from the shareholders. Some wanted a traditional pub – others wanted a fine-dining restaurant. Basically I am trying to combine the two. It is difficult, but I think we have the balance right."

"I wanted to take the pub to the next level, which is where the pub trade is going in general. If you're not a gastro pub, it is very difficult to survive, particularly in the countryside."

Richard finds during the week most of the locals are happy to have the toned-down bar menu, but at the weekends customers come for the à la carte choice.

"I think you have to be sensible and look at

**Ed Hill** talks to Farriers Arms chef Richard Bayliss, who is striving to make his mark at the Mersham gastro pub

## AMBITIOUS:

Richard Bayliss, chef at the Farriers Arms, is charged with changing the fortunes of a pub that has been bought and refurbished by a consortium of villagers

it from a business perspective. We have a lot of people from the village who come and eat with us during the week. They are not going to want fine dining every time, but on Fridays and Saturdays it is a different matter," he said.

And Richard, who began his cooking career as a commis chef at the age of 14, is still ambitious with the food. Ingredients are sourced locally and the menu changes with the seasons.

He said: "Our fish comes from Dymchurch, the meat comes from a butcher in Aldington who only uses Kent and Sussex meat, and my vegetables come from a supplier in Ashford. I try to change the menu every three months. I work with my suppliers very closely and I can be very demanding. If I want something, I want it as soon as possible."

Dishes have included rump of lamb, home-smoked pork loin and savoury ice-creams.

Richard said: "I have found that diners are more adventurous these days. I like to think we take old-fashioned dishes and use new techniques to change the taste and the texture."

"Even so, I don't think you should muck

around with flavours that work. There is a reason they have become established, but it's good to try to inject more flavour and texture into them or give them a new twist. I like to create a surprise on the plate when the food comes out to the customer."

The chef is ambitious for critical success but only if it helps the business.

He said: "I want to build on what we have started. I would like to get rosettes and stars in the future, but not to the extent where it affects trade. It's no good having chef's accolades if it reduces your trade."

Richard has also got used to having more than 100 shareholders all with a keen interest in what he does. "They are very honest," he said. "If they don't like something they soon let me know, but they are a fantastic bunch of people who will do anything for me."

"To have that much knowledge in so many different areas is a real help. Everybody is so enthusiastic and there's so much passion behind the pub and that makes me lift my game as well."

■ Visit [www.thefarriersarms.com](http://www.thefarriersarms.com)

## Farmers' markets

### Capel-le-Ferne

THE Capel-le-Ferne market is held every Tuesday and started as a new venture in April 2003 following an idea put forward by the village hall management committee to provide a service for the community. It has approximately 20 stalls every week.

### Bridge

THE market at Bridge is held next to The Red Lion on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. It aims to give shoppers the opportunity to buy high-quality, fresh local food and drink that contributes to their well-being, protects their environment and respects animal welfare.

### Sissinghurst

SISSINGHURST market is in the Elizabethan barn next to the Granary restaurant in the famous Sissinghurst Castle National Trust site on the second Monday of the month between midday and 3pm. It is a popular market, especially because of its lovely surroundings.

### Westerham

Westerham Town Partnership organises the market to promote high-quality, locally-produced food and drink on the first and third Sundays every month in the town square. The aim is to reduce the need to travel, reduce food miles and packaging waste.

### Sandwich

AT the heart of the historic town of Sandwich is the guildhall and cattle market, where the farmers' market is held, selling top-quality produce of all kinds. It takes place on the last Saturday in the month between the hours of 9am and 1pm.

### Whitstable

THE Whitstable farmer's market opens on the second and fourth Saturday of every month in St Mary's Hall. There you can buy organic produce from within 30 miles of Whitstable, although most farmers are much closer, selling local produce.

■ For more farmers' markets, visit [www.farmersmarkets.org.uk](http://www.farmersmarkets.org.uk)

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# Sugar sweetening the deal with pledge of investment



## The Apprentice

Starts Tuesday, May 10, 9pm, BBC One

LORD Alan Sugar is back with a new series of the award-winning reality show *The Apprentice*.

But this time, it is a little different. Gone are the days when 16 potential captains of industry duked it out for a six-figure salary to eat the crumbs from the millionaires' top table. Now, the contestants will be pushing themselves to the front of the queue for a £250,000 prize fund that will be invested into their own business.

The winning contestant will be able to choose what type of business they wish to set up and will have the backing and mentoring of Lord Sugar, with each taking a 50/50 stake in the company. If anything, this could be more lucrative than the original competition.

Just like before, series seven features 16 contestants who will be divided into two teams each week, with one nominated project manager. The teams will go head to head in a series of tasks selected by Lord Sugar that will test their business skills to the limits.

The two teams will then compete against each other under the watchful eye of Karren Brady and Nick Hewer, who will report their findings back to Lord Sugar.

After completing the task, both teams return to the boardroom to find out which team has won. Winning the task is usually dependent on gaining the most profit.

Winners are rewarded with a treat, while the losing team's project manager will select two individuals to accompany them back into the boardroom to possibly cop the chop. The three candidates put their case to Lord Sugar, who decides who will be fired.

But the simplicity ends there as the group of desperate hopefuls vie for attention and begin the slanging matches that can either enhance or destroy their reputations in the business world. Please let there be another Stuart 'The Brand' Baggs this year.



**CONTEST:** Lord Sugar will go into business with the winner as *The Apprentice* meets *Dragons'* Den



**CANDID:** The Bee Gees talk about their lives

## The brothers Gibb call the tune

### Bee Gees: In Our Own Time

Friday, May 13, 9pm, BBC Four

ARE they musical geniuses, or bearded oddballs with squeaky voices and an unusual sense of style? Well, if you're considering watching a programme about their legacy, you probably think they're rather good.

And of course, very few bands have contributed quite so much to the musical landscape throughout the years as the Gibb brothers. Even if their voices are a touch on the supersonic side of things.

*In Our Own Time* is the compelling story of the Bee Gees' career... from their roots in north-west England, through their early career in Australia, their return to England and an international breakthrough in the late 1960s. Not to mention the global superstardom with *Saturday Night Fever* and beyond.

Alongside the success is the heartache of the tragically early deaths of first their younger brother Andy and then Maurice. The story is told through the words of Barry and Robin Gibb and extensive interviews with Maurice filmed shortly before his death in January 2003.

The Bee Gees are synonymous with the UK pop charts and are often the first band anyone thinks of whenever the word 'disco' is uttered.

With estimated record sales standing at 220 million, as well as 45 years of tours and film soundtracks, the Gibb brothers are certainly worthy of a documentary.

Their writing talents were also explored by Diana Ross with *Chain Reaction*, Dolly Parton with *Islands In The Stream* and Status Quo with *Spicks And Specks*. But did you know that the brothers were born on the Isle Of Man? This documentary explores all you fans know and a few things you didn't.

## Chicago cops fight to blow away windy-city crime

IN a city swamped by crime and corruption, Chicago police officers know they have to stay ahead of the game or risk being blown away. From gangs to City Hall, they rub shoulders with the worst the windy city has to offer, fighting a daily battle to clean up the streets and the corridors of power.

Detective Teresa Colvin (Jennifer Beals, *Lie To Me*), the first female superintendent in the Chicago police department, makes it her personal mission to stamp out politicians

### The Chicago Code

Starts Thursday, May 12, 9pm, Sky One

looking for an easy life and a few backhanders.

At her side is cocksure policeman and former husband Jarek Wysocki (Jason Clarke, *Brotherhood*), a veteran who still loves his ex-wife and hates profanity. The pair are not afraid to cause a stink to put the city back on the straight and narrow – even if that means being caught in the crosshairs of building magnate-

turned-politician, Alderman Ronin Gibbons (Delroy Lindo).

The new series debuts in the UK on satellite channel Sky One, which has a good reputation for bringing US dramas to the British public.

In the first episode, Colvin lobbies for a corruption task force to investigate a politician, and Wysocki attends the scene of a murder with his new partner Caleb Evers.

This is a classic police drama from *The Shield* creator Shawn Ryan.

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Diversity and history mingle on this walk through some of the finest landscapes of the North Downs

**E**NJOY a short relaxing stroll around White Horse Wood, which is part of the North Downs and an area recognised for its attractive landscape.

Offering beautiful countryside and fascinating local history, there are frequent rest stops, giving you the ideal opportunity to admire the outstanding views of this beautiful part of the county.

Located just outside the busy county town of Maidstone within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, White Horse Wood is a named Site of Nature Conservation Interest.

It is a diverse landscape with dramatic chalk escarpments, secluded valleys, networks of sleepy lanes and hedgerows, ancient woodlands, distinctive villages, precious wildlife and many sites of historic and cultural interest.

All these make up a landscape that is such a valuable national asset that it was nationally designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1968.

More than 20,000 trees have been planted at the site, including oak, ash, silver birch, wild cherry and crab apple. And five hectares of land have been seeded to create an area of open grassland.

Just a short diversion from the planned route will take you past the medieval ruins of Thurnham Castle on the edge of the North Downs. The north side of the bailey wall still stands 10ft high and originally it enclosed an area of about a quarter of an acre. The west wall has completely collapsed.

There is no visible stonework on the large motte, although there were once two towers and an outer curtain wall.

The castle is thought to have been constructed by Robert de Thurnham in the reign of Henry II. Within the park boundaries, beneath the grass there lurks even more fascinating history: a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age enclosure some 3,000 years old.

The North Downs Way National Trail passes through White Horse Wood on its way from Farnham in Surrey to Dover. Much of the trail follows the Pilgrims Way, the legendary route used by pilgrims on their way from Winchester to Canterbury where they would pray at the tomb of martyred Thomas Becket.

Along the Pilgrims Way itself is the popular Black Horse pub in Thurnham, a gastro inn with accommodation.

On the other side of Detling Hill is the Kent County Showground. Why not time your visit to coincide with one of the many great family events that happen at the showground? Either that, or finish your afternoon walk with a stop at one of the village pubs in the area such as the 14th-century Cock Horse Inn at Detling.

Maidstone has three railway stations and excellent bus connections as well as two museums.

■ **Location:** White Horse Wood, ME14 3JG

■ **Distance:** 0.7 miles (1.1km), allow 30 mins

■ **OS Explorer Map:** 125

■ **Terrain:** Hard surface area

■ **Step count:** Approx 1,800

■ **Parking:** A pay-and-display car park operates at the park

■ **Refreshments and facilities:** There are pubs and a shop in nearby Detling village and Thurnham



**BREATHTAKING SCENERY:** White Horse Wood walk is located within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has been named a Site of Nature Conservation Interest



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## Live show Glam rockers' tribute night

**Orchard Theatre, Dartford**  
Thursday, May 19  
01322 220000 or visit  
[www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk)

FORTY years ago, a record that inspired glam rock was released. Get It On, written by Marc Bolan and T.Rex, spent four weeks at No 1. Now T.REXTASY, the only band endorsed and approved by Bolan's family, will be playing homage to the great man's biggest hits. The group will be joined by Aladdinsane, the country's leading tribute act to David Bowie. They faithfully re-create the sights and sounds of many of his classic songs. Fans say Aladdinsane have the ability to draw in their audience and throw a spectacular piece of rock history right back at them. Classic music fans will not be disappointed by these two top-class glam-rock tribute acts. Rock on with tickets at £19.50 and £18.50.



## Time travel A trip back to Hellfire Corner

**Dover Castle**  
Sat to Mon, May 28-30  
open 10am to 5pm  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

THE final bank holiday of spring brings with it a special event to journey back in time to the Second World War. Discover Winston Churchill's secret bunker at Dover Castle and Hellfire Corner. History buffs can experience what it was like for intelligence experts and soldiers taking cover with the air-raid siren blaring in the wartime tunnels in the chalky white cliffs. Learn what it was like to ration and how evacuation changed the lives of so many people from Kent. See the secret tactics room and dorm rooms that housed the British intelligence teams during the 1940s. Youngsters can also take part in the Dover obstacle course while also learning to make their own gas-mask box to take home.

## The Dockyard Night in the museum

**Chatham Dockyard**  
Saturday, May 14, 7.30pm  
01634 823845 or email  
[museumatnight@chdt.org.uk](mailto:museumatnight@chdt.org.uk)

THE Historic Dockyard at Chatham will host an exciting event in support of Museums At Night. The national campaign, led by Culture24, showcases the unique and vibrant museums, galleries,

heritage sites, libraries and archives around the UK. A Night At The Museum's spooky sleepover, sponsored by Sky Arts, will be held for the first time in the remarkable No 1 Smithery building at the famous Medway dockyard. There have been unexplained experiences in this listed building and scheduled ancient monument since it opened to the public last year. This event includes activities during the evening of May 14, including rocket-firing and a ghost tour in the Wooden Walls of England that is suitable for

all ages. A quiz trail around No 1 Smithery and a sunset ceremony at the end of the evening are all included. Supper and breakfast will be served. There is a limited number of subsidised tickets, courtesy of Sky Arts at a cost of £3 per person, but once these have been sold out, tickets go on sale at the normal price of £25. This event runs from 7.30pm to 9am the following morning and the minimum age to attend is eight. Children must be accompanied by a full-paying adult and all event areas have wheelchair access.

## Theatre Broadwater Warren

**near Tunbridge Wells**  
Sunday, May 8  
01580 879958  
[www.rspb.org.uk/reserves](http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves)

SOMETHING new is happening at the RSPB's Broadwater Warren nature reserve, near Tunbridge Wells. The Company, the Sussex specialists in unusual site-specific theatre, will be presenting their latest family show on Sunday, May 8. You never know what is going to happen with The Company, but it will certainly be a unique experience. Be prepared for an entertaining show and a rollicking good story full of fun, romance and lots of audience participation. Broadwater Warren, which is being restored to heathland, provides the ideal backdrop to this new production commissioned by the Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme and supported by East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council and the RSPB. Alan Loveth, a volunteer manager at the reserve, said: "It's exciting to offer visitors this kind of experience. Lots of people already enjoy the reserve, but this is a chance to see it in a completely new light." Phoning ahead essential.



## Psychic Sally Morgan in contact

**Woodville Halls Theatre, Gravesend**  
Sunday, May 22, 7.30pm  
01474 337774

MEDIUM to the stars Sally Morgan returns to Gravesend with her national theatre tour. Fresh from her Living TV series Psychic Sally On The Road, Britain's much-loved celebrity psychic returns to entertain the north Kent public. Morgan most notably spoke to the late Princess Diana and continues

to use her psychic skills to help stars as well as members of the public, on and off tour. She claims to have seen her first spirit when she was just four. She quickly realised she was different from her family and friends and spent most of her early life hiding her interests and skills. It took many years before Morgan began to understand how to control of the mysteries of the spirit world and eventually became a professional medium. Note that evenings of mediumship are not scientifically proven and are for entertainment purposes. Tickets cost £23 from [www.woodvillehalls.com](http://www.woodvillehalls.com).



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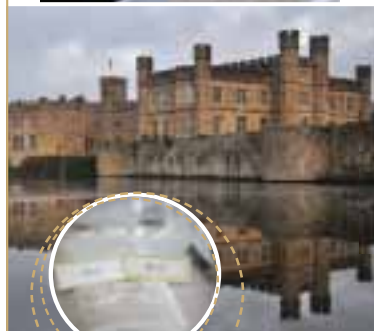
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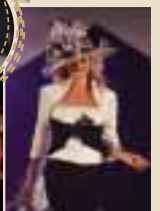
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The shows are co-ordinated and professionally choreographed creating the 'wow factor'.



## Rail history Relive the 40s war spirit

### Kent & East Sussex Railway

Tenterden  
Sat and Sun, May 14-15  
[www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk)

THE K&ESR is hosting its annual 1940s weekend when visitors of all ages can relive the 40s lifestyle along the line between Tenterden and Bodiam. The historic railway is the ideal location for this event when steam trains, period vehicles, re-enactors and characters in authentic costume will create a nostalgic atmosphere. Visitors can also take advantage of a full steam-train service and enjoy a ride in one of the restored vintage carriages. Highlights of the weekend include an air display by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight on Saturday and singer Fiona Harrison performing 40s songs. For ticket information, call 01580 765155 or visit [www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk).



## Ghost tour Feel the chill in the night

### Chiddingstone Castle

Friday, May 13  
Tel: 01892 872746  
[www.chiddingstonecastle.org](http://www.chiddingstonecastle.org)

COME along to Chiddingstone Castle near Edenbridge, if you dare, to experience the castle's first-ever ghost tour. The spooky tours will include ghostly tales about the castle. The event is part of Museums At Night weekend. You will hear about Chiddingstone's history and help a team with its ghost-hunting investigations. Chiddingstone Castle can be traced back

to the early 1500s and has undergone many architectural changes and been owned and lived in by an eclectic mix of families. The early timber-framed Tudor dwelling, inhabited by the Streatfeild family, was replaced and partly transformed into High Street House in the 1670s. The building went through another transformation during the early 1800s when then-owner Henry Streatfeild rebuilt the house to resemble a medieval castle. The children's ghost tour, for youngsters aged eight to 15, will take place between 7pm and 9pm (tickets £8 per child). The adult tours, over-16s only, will be between 10pm and midnight (£12 per person). Places are limited, so call 01892 872746 or visit [www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk](http://www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk).

## Historic house Tour of Pugin's dream home

### The Grange, Ramsgate

Friday to Sunday, May 13-16  
01628 825925  
[bookings@landmarktrust.org](mailto:bookings@landmarktrust.org)

THE Landmark Trust, a building preservation charity, will be opening The Grange in Ramsgate, which was designed by Augustus Pugin. The free open days give people

a chance to explore this Grade I-listed building designed and lived in by the influential and prolific 19th-century architect. Visitors will be able to see the library, where Pugin designed the interiors for the House of Lords, the private chapel and the opulent schemes that were re-created during the building's restoration using fragments found beneath the joinery. Pugin designed The Grange while other architects were planning symmetrical Georgian terraces. He built very few domestic houses, and at The Grange he tried to create the ideal home

for his family. He also began the construction of St Augustine's monastery and parish church next door. The Grange was restored by the Landmark Trust and now has a secure future as self-catering holiday accommodation. It is available for groups of up to eight people to experience living for a few days or weeks. A free information leaflet will be available at the open days explaining the building's history and restoration. For more information, call 01628 825925 or email [bookings@landmarktrust.org](mailto:bookings@landmarktrust.org).



## Concert Equator world music festival

### Astley House, Maidstone

Saturday, May 21, 7.30pm  
[www.equatorfestival.com](http://www.equatorfestival.com)

THE Equator world music festival is welcoming Arab music sensation Attab Haddad. His blend of jazz and flamenco fusion comes from the the Mediterranean and Middle East and creates hypnotic melodies and sensual rhythms. He is a virtuoso of the traditional Arabic lute or oud, to which he has brought a revolutionary new approach. Attab has also collaborated with other artists as co-composer, producer, musician and session player and featured as a guest on albums and on BBC Radio 3. He is a founding member of the flamenco fusion band Alcazaba. He has also worked in film and TV and worked on James Newton Howard's score for Ed Zwick's film, Blood Diamond. His band have just finished recording their debut album. The concert is at Kent Music, Astley House at 7.30pm. Tickets: adults £8, concessions £5, students £3 (buy them at Maidstone Tourist Information, or visit [www.equatorfestival.com](http://www.equatorfestival.com)).



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	<b>GREASE</b> <b>MUSICAL</b> Wed 11-Sat 14th May 7.30pm £10 Group discounts for 10 or more: The students at Rydell High have to deal with love, gang violence, teen pregnancy and friendship.		
	<b>DIE FLEDERMAUS</b> <b>OPERA</b> Sun 15th May 7.30pm £16/£14 Friends £12	A new educational play created by local participants that lets audiences look at the heritage site of the Theatre Royal Margate building in an entirely new light. Box Office: 0845 130 1786 or 01327 787780 <a href="http://www.theatreroyalmargate.com">www.theatreroyalmargate.com</a>	

Theatre Royal Margate

# DIE FLEDERMAUS

**SUN 15th MAY**

**7.30pm**

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Theatre Royal Margate

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This entirely new, saucy, production is directed and designed by the team that created the company's recent wonderful production of The Mikado.



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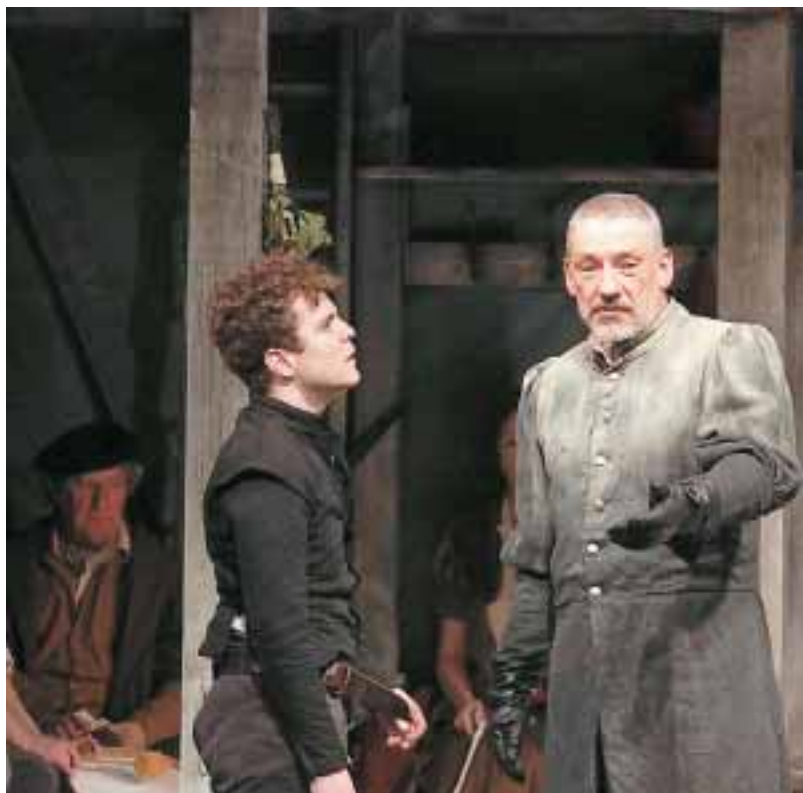
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## Shakespeare's Globe Hamlet

**Groombridge Place**  
Tue to Thu, May 24-26  
020 74019919  
www.shakespearesglobe.com

SHAKESPEARE'S Globe is taking to the road again with Shakespeare's intellectual masterpiece Hamlet. Directed by Globe artistic director Dominic Dromgoole, rising star Joshua McGuire takes the title role. McGuire appeared in Posh at the Royal Court in 2010 and co-starred in new BBC series The Hour with Ben Whishaw and Dominic West. Dromgoole has directed on a number of productions using an Elizabethan-style booth stage – inspired by paintings and etchings from Shakespeare's time and a troupe of eight actors. Tour destinations include Bodleian Library Quadrangle in Oxford, The Minack in Cornwall and, of course Groombridge Place Gardens. Tickets £17.50.



## Guitar duo Jamming session

**Lighthouse Bar, Margate**  
Sunday, May 8  
For more information, email  
beachkeys@aol.com

GUITAR duo Jamie Moore and Dave Reay will be heading to the Thanet coast for a classic jamming session. Jamie Moore is a versatile musician and composer who moves with ease from the structures of classical music to jazz. Although born in Canada, Moore lives in the UK. His long career has included playing in clubs and theatres as well as TV shows and films. As a result, he has developed a composing and playing style that combines the freedom of a jazz session through improvisation with the form and structure of a classical music. Moore has all the style and presence of a seasoned stage performer. His musical partner, Dave Reay, with his virtuosity and versatility, has been already been described as "sheer damn class" by sections of the music press. The Lighthouse Bar on the Harbour Arm should make for a relaxed and scenic setting for two very talented musicians. Go on, give it a try.

## Heads South Latin salsa and jazz

**Tower Theatre**  
Folkestone Jazz Club  
Thursday, May 12, 8.30pm  
Phone 01303 277175

DESCRIBED as the best Latin salsa band in the country, Heads South will be doing just that as they look to delight audiences in Kent. Their music combines great rhythm and

great melody in a repertoire of original compositions and arrangements of well-loved and well-known tunes. Both the keen concert-hall listener and the full-on dancefloor mover will be able to relax and enjoy the Latino soundtrack. The band's five-piece line-up is led by pianist composer John Harriman and features the outstanding Steve Waterman, professor of jazz trumpet at the Royal Academy of Music and Trinity College. Also on board are Cuban percussionist Chino Martell Morgan, the versatile Buster

Birch on drums and New Zealander Tim Robertson on bass guitar. This is a new line-up of musicians drawn from diverse sounds and cultures. It encompasses memorable new tunes such as El Cardenal, Juntito and Sweet Swan to new arrangements of classics such as Besame Mucho and Mack The Knife. Think Buena Vista Social Club and add the excitement of jazz, great new melody, the warmth of a Latin evening and grooving away into the night. Tickets for what should be a fantastic event cost £8.



## Exhibition Local artist Michael Blake

**Harbour Arm, Margate**  
Until Sunday, May 15  
www.margateharbourarm.co.uk or 01843 260260

KENT artist Michael Blake has his latest exhibition at the Harbour Arm Gallery in Margate. Born in Cheshire in 1951, Blake trained at Jacob Kramer College, Leeds, and at Canterbury College of Art, where he was taught by Geoffrey Rigden, Ian Dury and Thomas Watt. The artist himself has taught in Canterbury, Dublin and at the summer and postgraduate schools at Cyprus College



Art. He currently works from a studio near his home in Wickhambreaux. Critic Francis Spalding has said of his work: "Blake's canvasses exploit colours to suggest mood. Every shift of hue tells – nothing is added for the sake of effect."



## Big band Swing with Sinatra & Co

**Granville Theatre, Ramsgate**  
Sunday, July 2, 7.30pm  
Tickets £12: 01843 591750 or  
www.granvilletheatre.com

THE big-band sound is coming to Ramsgate this summer with the Swing'n'Sinatra show making an appearance at the Granville Theatre. Simone Smith and her husband Chris feature in the show, which boasts a host of classic big-

band and swing songs from artists such as Frank Sinatra and Glenn Miller through to Jools Holland-style jazz. Chris said: "I've been brought up with this style of music as my father played trombone for Frank Sinatra on his European tours. It's great that there's a strong resurgence in jazz and swing music enjoyed by all generations. "We're looking forward to bringing the show back to town." Simone, who sings and plays lead alto saxophone, has also played with such artists as Paul Weller, John Williams and Ivy Benson.

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## The Troubled Man

**Henning Mankell**

£17.99, Harveill Secker

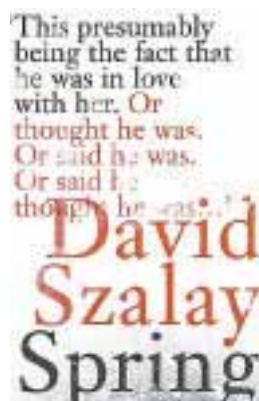
HENNING Mankell is known for the creation of Swedish detective Wallander and has written more than 10 novels featuring the lugubrious hero.

The Troubled Man is reportedly Wallander's swansong and follows the detective as he tries to unravel the disappearance of his daughter's future in-laws.

It takes him on a journey into Sweden's naval history, with a particular focus on incidents from the Cold War.

All the while, Wallander battles with the physical and mental obstacles presented by old age and tries to get to grips with the world growing younger around him.

The sleuthing work keeps the book interesting, while Wallander's inner battle provides a compelling sub-plot that becomes more prevalent as the novel progresses.



## Spring

**David Szalay**

£16.99, Jonathan Cape

IT IS unsettling the way that David Szalay seems to utterly inhabit his characters in Spring, which is told through multiple points of view, with the same events seen anew by a different set of eyes.

James was a someone in

the internet boom, but after the bust he fears he is no one, turning to everything from being an estate agent to a racehorse-owner.

He is a 30-something man who has lost it all on a number of occasions and his latest get-rich-quick scheme involves a horse-racing scam.

So when he encounters Katherine, a woman recently separated, things are not going to be smooth.

Meeting Katherine at a wedding, the two begin the awkward dance of a new relationship. We zigzag through time as Szalay takes us through the seemingly mundane middle-class lives of the pair, as well as friends and relatives, at the beginning of one spring in London.

The nuances of their emotions, or at times lack of emotion, are handled with an expert, but light, touch in this absorbing read.



## Anatomy Of A Disappearance

**Hisham Matar**

£16.99, Viking

HISHAM Matar's first novel, In The Country Of Men, was short-listed for the 2006 Booker Prize.

Anatomy follows this semi-autobiographical ground with both the author and his narrator, Nuri, suffering the pain of their father being abducted by Egyptian secret agents, never to be seen again.

Nuri lives in 70s Cairo with his father, a former Libyan government minister. His mother died when he was eight, and six years later both father and son fall in love with Mona, a beautiful 24-year-old English girl.

The family are to spend Christmas in Switzerland when Nuri's father is kidnapped.

Nuri initially enjoys being alone with Mona, but as they discover more about his father, his world is shattered.

This is a beautifully-written book, full of strong characters. Matar's style is economic yet provides pathos and depth.



## And On Piano... Nicky Hopkins

**Julian Dawson**

£24.95, Desert Hearts

IN this biography, musician Julian Dawson looks back on Nicky Hopkins's impressive 35-year career as a musician, song-writer, singer and producer.

The work is subtitled 'The Extraordinary Life Of Rock's Greatest Session Musician', which certainly does not overstate the case.

Session pianist Hopkins appeared with so many artists during his life that a complete discography is probably impossible, but a list of his better-known clients includes The Beatles both together and individually, The Rolling Stones, The Who, The Kinks, David Bowie, Steve Miller, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Van Morrison, Rod Stewart, Donovan, The Jeff Beck Group, Harry Nilsson, Joe Cocker, The Yardbirds, Alexis Korner, Ella Fitzgerald, The Easybeats... the list goes on.

He even played with the Bay City Rollers – and the author.

Dawson, who was brought up in Tunbridge Wells, said: "This really was a labour of love – it was a story I really felt should be told.

"When you see the amount of classic songs that Nicky contributed to, you realise how important he was to music.

"All the people I spoke to were very complimentary about both him and his work.

"Pete Townshend sent me a series of eloquent emails and Keith Richards rang me at midnight when I was in Frankfurt from his home in Connecticut. He then said he had to go and he'd ring back in an hour – which he did.

"When I needed inspiration for this project, which I started 13 years ago, I turned to Nicky's music – particularly an eight-minute track he did with the Steve Miller Band called Baby's House."

## Hop Farm Carl Barat joins line-up

**Hop Farm, Paddock Wood**

Friday, July 1 and July 2

020 7644 1445

[www.hopfarmfestival.com](http://www.hopfarmfestival.com)

Ticket prices vary

LEGENDARY Libertines frontman Carl Barat is the final big name to be added to the Hop Farm Festival band list. Best known for his time with the cult band that also featured Pete Doherty, Barat will join a plethora of big names coming to Kent for the music festival.

The fourth year of the event also sees Morrissey, Human League, Lou Reed, Graham Coxon and Ocean Colour Scene take to the stage. Festival boss Vince Power said: "I'm very pleased to announce the final acts of the festival. This year's line-up once again shows that there is something for everyone and that the Hop Farm is a festival all can enjoy."

Fans at this year's event will also see legends like The Eagles paired with former Killers frontman Brandon Flowers. Maintaining its no-branding, no-sponsorship ethos, the festival sticks to programming legendary acts alongside the contemporary.



## MJ tribute Jackson Live In Concert

**Central Theatre, Chatham**

Friday, May 13, 7.30pm

Tickets £16.50-£18

01634 338 338

JACKSON Live In Concert is the ultimate Michael Jackson tribute show, featuring the songs, the fabulous costumes and, of course, the dance moves. MJ is remembered

fondly in his many incarnations as one of the most profoundly influential artists of all time. His career spanned almost five decades of music and he was at the forefront of popular music, being crowned the king of pop. Jackson Live In Concert sees long-time fan Amir Sharmar faithfully re-create the Michael Jackson experience. An accomplished vocalist and dancer, Sharmar performs Thriller, Billy Jean, Beat It and a whole host of other Michael Jackson tracks, complete with dance moves and full backing band.

## Music festival X-Factor's Ben and Stacey

**Music on the Hill, Kings Hill**

Friday to Sunday, June 24-26

0844 873 7339

[www.musiconthehill.org.uk](http://www.musiconthehill.org.uk)

QUEEN of the jungle and X-Factor star Stacey Solomon has been announced as the guest host for charity festival Music on the Hill. The event, which will also host boy-band McFly and classical singer Katherine Jenkins, will raise cash for the Demelza Hospice Care For Children charity. The three-day festival also features ABBA tribute act Bjorn Again and Kent's own X-Factor star Ben Mills. Ticket prices for each day vary.



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With the summer coming, how about the chance to eat outside at lunchtime or during the long evenings? This arrangement is from Next: Vintage table and chairs £250, plant stand £35, parasol base £25, spot parasol £35, tea light holders £12 (set of 3), butterfly garden stake £10, pitcher £8, bowls £4.50 (set of 4), plates £4.50 (set of 4), cutlery £3 (set of 12), wine glasses £4.50 (set of 4), cupcake stand £12  
[www.next.co.uk](http://www.next.co.uk)

Home interiors and exteriors can make your place to live the envy of all who visit. Whether it's a large new piece of furniture which becomes the focal point of a room, or that extremely original and personal piece of decor that becomes a talking point, here is a range of ideas to brighten up the house. And with the hot weather on its way, how about a spot of alfresco dining?



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Find some extra space in your home without the inconvenience of having to bring in the builders or moving out when you install a new summerhouse

**A**S the family grows and our possessions increase, we all strive to make the best of the space we have with clever storage solutions. But unless you're lucky enough to already have all the living space you need, there will undoubtedly come a time when you need to consider upsizing.

However, this needn't mean a costly extension or stressful move – a garden building could be the answer to your prayers.

Forest, the UK's leading garden timber company, has a new range of log cabins and summerhouses in a range of sizes and prices to suit most budgets and requirements, so removing the need to uproot the entire family or turn your house upside down for months on end.

Forest has added five new summerhouses to its collection. Made from 12mm shiplap, with rounded finishes, as well as stylish window and door furniture and styrene-glazed windows and doors, each design is finished with dip-treated, factory-applied preservative.

The Loxley Summerhouse offers a simple apex design, with double doors and two fully-glazed windows at £899. Size 2m x 2m x 1m.

The Aurora Summerhouse is available in two sizes and has a contemporary design with sweeping curved roof, double doors and large rectangular windows. (Large 2m x 2m x 1m, £1,499 and small 2m x 2m x 3m, £1,099).

The Larkwood Cottage Summerhouse is a larger option where space is at a premium. Offering an integral veranda and spacious interior, the striking roof design is accentuated by stylish felt shingles. It is available from £1,599. (Large 2 x 3 x 3m £1,899 and small 2 x 2 x 3m £1,599).

The collection also includes the Northcote Summerhouse at £1,099, featuring an integral veranda, and the Ashcombe Summerhouse (£1,299) with slanted roof and double doors.

New for 2011, Forest has introduced a range of beautifully-designed timber log cabins to add to its garden buildings collection.

If you're looking for an office space, craft workshop or study, a playroom for the children, gym space or even a spare bedroom for visitors or an entertainment room, each of the premium log cabins have been designed as an answer to all your space issues.

From £1,249 to £7,999 with sizes varying from 2.2m x 2.2m to 5m x 5m, there is a log cabin to suit any need. The range offers a choice of building shapes and designs, from traditional to contemporary to suit all tastes.

All Forest log cabins offer pressure-treated floor-bearers and wall logs machined from kiln-dried timber, which comes from slow-grown Nordic spruce forested from sustainable sources.

The range is available in 28mm-44mm log thickness and incorporates hand-finished tilt-and-turn windows, offering a mix of single- and double-glazing, depending on the log thickness.

**■ Forest's products can be bought across the country, including at Notcutts in Pembury and Bearsted, Brookside Nursery in East Peckham, Alsford Timber in Sheerness and Tonbridge and the Alkham Valley Garden Centre near Dover.**



■ The Harwood, pictured top and above right, £1,549, shows just how spacious a summerhouse can be

■ Clockwise from bottom right: the Buxton (£2,599), Wenlock (£2,249) and Malvern (£2,449) are among the many designs from which to choose





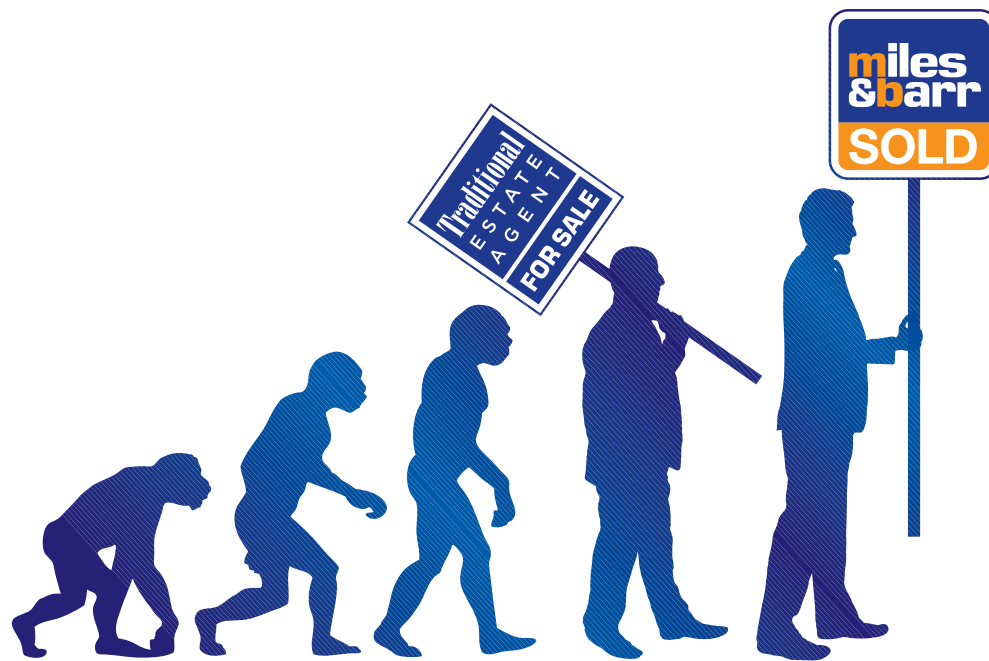
■ There's plenty of space for you to relax in the Buxton, above, which starts at £2,599... or, right, the Bredon, which is priced at £3,049



■ The Loxely is for those on a tighter budget. Priced at just £899, there is still plenty of space for storage in this room outside your home

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**A ROYAL TREAT:** Ramsgate boasts the country's only royal harbour – it is also one of the loveliest

# Robust interest in maritime gem

**R**AMSGATE is a coastal town going through a period of transition. The Thanet resort is famed for its fishing and tourism charms, with the only royal harbour in the UK, a thriving marina and the Port of

Ramsgate attracting a constant flow of visitors.

Like its near-neighbour Margate, Ramsgate has suffered from decades of gradual decline, hitting property prices across the town.

However, improved rail links have already helped to attract much-needed investment, which is changing Ramsgate's landscape and prospects.

With ever-increasing numbers of commuters looking to move to Ramsgate, housing developments have sprung up across the town and new businesses have set up near the harbour.

The town itself offers some wonderful Georgian and Victorian architecture, which is a magnet for London buyers.

The improvements in the rail network mean that the town is becoming more accessible

for tourists and also more convenient for commuters.

The Ramsgate property market has fared better than many during the financial downturn and this is primarily the result of the appeal of the town and the recent investment.

The seafront and harbour area is particularly popular, with its eclectic array of bars and restaurants enjoying stunning views over the royal harbour.

The proposed Royal Sands development nearby is scheduled to take advantage of the panoramic views and it is rumoured that celebrities from the sporting world such as Chelsea footballing superstars John Terry and Ashley Cole have visited with a view to getting on the waiting list.

Graham Kinnear, managing director at local agency Milton Ashbury, is convinced that the Ramsgate market is set to improve yet further.

He said: "The sales data

certainly show that the market has bottomed and is now moving upwards. We are seeing robust interest from out-of-town buyers and renewed interest in buy-to-let in the town"



## PROPERTY SPOTLIGHT ON RAMSGATE

### What makes it special?

RAMSGATE'S heart is its harbour, which remains the only royal harbour in the UK. The east Kent town's sea links are strong, with a thriving marina and port. Neighbouring Margate suffered a post-tourism slump, and while Ramsgate experienced some decline, it wasn't as severe and accordingly it found it easier to move on to a new period of prosperity.

### Room to improve

DESPITE the recent introduction of the high-speed rail link, it still takes too long to reach the capital from Ramsgate. Keeping with the transport theme, a long-promised passenger ferry service to France has failed to materialise. Parts of the town, noticeably near the high street, are badly run down and in need of genuine regeneration.

### Prices

PROPERTY prices in the middle of Ramsgate vary drastically dependent on number of bedrooms and proximity to the sea. A five-bedroom house in Nelson Crescent is currently up for sale for £565,000, while a similar-sized property in Vale Square is on offer at the same price. At the other end of the scale, one-bed flats can be snapped up from as little as £59,000; however, these are further inland.

The rental market follows the same trend, with rooms available in larger buildings for upwards of £200 per week, down to one-bedroom flats on offer for as little as £80 per week.

### Shops

RAMSGATE has a number of small high-street shops, but retail is an area where it must seek to improve in the coming years. While the scope of shops is unimpressive,



Ramsgate does enjoy an array of top eateries, particularly near the harbour.

### Schools

THE town's grammar schools both notched up excellent GCSE exam results in the last academic year. Clarendon House Grammar School students secured a 100 per cent pass mark against the Government's five passes at A\*-C grade, while Chatham House was not far off perfection with 97 per cent. Clarendon scored an impressive 99 per cent in the five passes at A\*-C (including English and maths), while Chatham House posted 92.4 per cent.

The nearest college is Thanet College, in Broadstairs, which is also home to a Canterbury Christ Church University campus.

### Connections

THE main road linking Ramsgate to the heart of the county is the A299 Thanet Way, which joins the M2/A2. Motorists can reach the M25 from Ramsgate in a little over an hour. The coastal A256 takes drivers down to Dover and onwards to the A20 for the Channel Tunnel. A passenger ferry service runs six times a day from the Port of Ramsgate to Ostende, Belgium.

### What's on

MARITIME fans can take a look at Ramsgate harbour and the east Kent coastline's development through the ages at Ramsgate Maritime Museum. Sports fans can watch Ramsgate football club at the Southwood Stadium or Thanet Wanderers rugby club at St Peters. The harbour also plays host to an annual powerboat grand prix every summer as well as the wind-powered international sailing regatta – Ramsgate Week – usually held in August. Film fans can catch the latest Hollywood blockbusters at the Granville Cinema, in Victoria Parade.

### Around and about

RAMSGATE'S nearest neighbours are Margate and Broadstairs. Margate has been buoyed by the £14 million Turner Contemporary gallery, which opened last month. The town still retains its seaside charm, which saw it prosper in the 1970s and 80s, including arcades and a sweeping promenade.

Broadstairs offers a more relaxing experience, although the popular Folk Week is not to be missed.

Golfers can enjoy a range of excellent courses, such as North Foreland at Broadstairs and, of course, Royal St George's at Sandwich.



**NEXT WEEK:** PROPERTY SPOTLIGHT FOCUSES ON TENTERDEN

# Coastal homes to rent or buy we've got it all online



Picture by Paul Jerreat:  
**Ramsgate Harbour**

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## £169,950

### Chapel Cottage

A BEAUTIFULLY refurbished two-bedroom detached Grade II-listed home close to town but in a secluded location. It has two reception rooms and separate kitchen with a hidden cellar and access out to the walled patio garden. The upstairs consists of two double bedrooms, the master with an en-suite shower, and then a family bathroom. It is tastefully decorated throughout with dado rails and large sash windows and feature fireplaces. The main reception includes a cast-iron wood-burner and stripped-wood flooring. The kitchen plays home to a range of wall and base units, rolled-edge work surface, stainless-steel sink unit with mixer tap and drainer, space for a fridge, washing machine, electric oven and gas four-ring hob with extractor. The rear courtyard garden houses raised brick flower borders, a water feature and toilet.

**AGENT: Milton Ashbury**  
**01843 225533**



### Large family rooms and near town

## £240,000

### North Avenue

IF your ideal family home is the sort of property that is brimming with charm and character, has large family rooms and is still within a short distance of the town and harbour, then this could be just the property for you. The lounge boasts a beautiful open fireplace and surround, while there is space for a family room just off the kitchen area.

**Agent: Ward and Partners**  
**01843 580314**

## Refurbished two-bedroom home boasts a hidden cellar



### Carved Greek key symbols and servants' bells

## £480,000

### Paragon

IT is a rare treat to find a house with so many original features, in such a great location and in such good condition throughout. The owners have taken great care

to maintain the house, while embracing modern living. The many treasures start before you have even set foot in the building. The front door has hand-carved Greek key symbols, a theme which runs throughout the original internal doors and fireplace in the master bedroom. The ground floor has two curved

solid-wood doors and the bay windows at the front are possibly the only original ones with curved glass remaining in Paragon. The servants' bells in the lounge, kitchen and top floor are in working order, so there's no need to shout upstairs that dinner is ready!  
**AGENT: Ward and Partners**  
**01843 580314**



### Two-bedroom apartment with sea view

## £195,000

### Granville Court

WITH unparalleled sea views and vaulted ceiling, the open space in this penthouse apartment in Victoria Parade incorporates a stylish kitchen opening to dining and living areas. This two-bedroom property, in good decorative order, includes an en-suite bathroom off the master bedroom and a reception with Juliet balcony, which looks out on to the seafront. The kitchen includes wall and base units with granite-effect worksurfaces, oven, hob and hood, space for a fridge-freezer, an integrated washing machine and a dishwasher.

**AGENT: Milton Ashbury**  
**01843 583388**



### Grade II-listed four-bed home

## £350,000

### Clifton Lawn

MOVE straight in and put your feet up. The owners have renovated the property throughout during the last six years, so you can now enjoy a Grade II-listed house without any concerns over having to carry out urgent repairs. The house lends itself to family

life. On the lower ground floor you will find a large open-plan kitchen and family room and on the ground floor are two further reception rooms, so there is plenty of room for all the family to relax. Four large bedrooms arranged over the first and second floors in this property, situated in a historical area, with Pugin's Grange opposite.

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## Harbour close at hand

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### Wellington Crescent

THIS newly-refurbished groundfloor one-bedroom apartment in Wellington Crescent offers a sea view. Internally in lovely decorative order, this home comprises a lounge with a modern fitted kitchen incorporated, a new

bathroom – a white suite with mains shower over the bath – separate toilet and bedroom. There are wooden floors throughout and gas central heating. With an entry-phone system and finished to a high standard, an internal viewing is highly recommended. The harbour and Ramsgate marina are right on the doorstep.

**AGENT: Milton Ashbury**  
**01843 583388**



## One-bed with en-suite shower room

£425pcm

### Hibernia Street

THIS beautiful converted one-bedroom apartment features

stunning wooden floors, gas central heating and double-glazing. The en-suite shower room makes this property stand out against other similar-sized apartments in its price range. It is in excellent

decorative order throughout and ideally situated just a few minutes' walk away from both Ramsgate town centre and the marina.

**AGENT: Milton Ashbury**  
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## Two-bedroom split-level maisonette

£520pcm

### Alma Road

THIS two-double-bedroom split-level maisonette has its own private entrance. The property boasts a large lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom and large loft room. Its spacious rooms and layout make it stand out above other properties in the same price range and location. There is gas central heating and double-glazing throughout. The property is in the middle of town, just a few minutes' walk from Ellington Park. DSS top-up considered.

**AGENT: Miles & Barr**  
**01843 808589**



## Private patios from both bedrooms

£750pcm

### St Augustine's Road

THIS two-bedroom unfurnished property is in the

newly-converted Regency Building. The stunning apartment benefits from integral appliances in the kitchen, jacuzzi bath in the bathroom and access to a private patio from both

bedrooms. It is in excellent decorative order throughout. Stunning views of Port of Ramsgate. Minutes away from Ramsgate town centre.

**AGENT: Milton Ashbury**  
**01843 583388**



## Second-floor spacious flat

£325pcm

### King Street

ONE-BEDROOM unfurnished second-floor flat situated within a short walking distance of Ramsgate town and seafront, benefiting from entry phone and fitted kitchen. The property consists of a spacious lounge, bathroom with three-piece bathroom suite and fitted kitchen with space for appliances. Ideally located and on offer at a fantastic low rental price that sets it apart from similar Ramsgate town-centre apartments. Finished to a high standard.

**AGENT: Belmonte**  
**01843 808584**



## In heart of the town

£465pcm

### Hardres Street

A SMART and particularly well-presented basement flat in the heart of Ramsgate town centre. Its prime location makes it stand out from

similar properties on the rental market. It has a large lounge and bedroom and is finished to a high standard. Having been the subject of considerable refurbishment, the property is worthy of an early internal inspection.

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# Forester growing strong

By Sam Davison

[editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk)

SUBARU could argue that it created the current crossover sector with its original Forester, which arrived in the UK in 1997.

While the newcomer stuck rigidly to established Subaru principles – horizontally-opposed engine and all-wheel drive – the Forester was more high-riding estate car than serious off-roader.

For some buyers, though, this was a big plus since the Forester's low centre of gravity made it less prone to rolling if taken over undulating terrain. It was also an impressive 4x4 holdall for those who wanted practicality and extra grip.

That it didn't take the market by storm like the Nissan Qashqai did a decade later, is probably more due to the fact that Subaru was not then able to offer a diesel option.

But now into its third generation – launched 2008 – the Forester has that capability in the form of a punchy, economical all-new flat-four diesel produced in house by Subaru and representing one of the Japanese marque's most crucial commercial decisions of recent decades.

And as we have found in other models, fitted with this 'boxer' diesel – still unique in the marketplace – it has created a flexible, refined and economical powertrain that also averages around 45mpg in 147bhp diesel Forester models (from £23,070).

This renders the cheaper 150bhp 2.0-litre petrol alternative (from £21,370) fairly pointless with its inferior acceleration and fuel economy – it averages around 10mpg less than the diesel.

The Forester is as practical as ever yet sharper looking than before. The driving position is excellent, with a good high-up view out, aided by lots of glass and little intrusion from the pillars, while boot space is above average for the class.

**SUBARU FORESTER XS NAVPLUS PRICE £29,070**

**FACT FILE**



Image: ★★★★★  
 Space: ★★★★★  
 Value: ★★★★★  
 Reliability: ★★★★★  
 How green?: ★★★★★  
 Road tax: £180  
 Kent dealers:  
 Canterbury Subaru  
 08430 222052  
 Walldonway Larkfield  
 0844 662 6857  
 Lifestyle Tunbridge Wells  
 0844 662 6853

**RUGGED:**  
 The Subaru Forester has sacrificed some on-road sharpness to cope with more trying conditions

The interior remains typical Subaru though, erring on the side of durability and ergonomics rather than flair.

And that fits well with the Forester tradition; the old straight-laced estate body may have been ditched in favour of a more contemporary off-roader/crossover look, but you still get the feeling that this car will deliver genuinely rugged performance when the chips are down, or rather, the snow is all around.

There is also decent ground clearance and it may be that the Forester has sacrificed some on-road sharpness in order to cope better with rougher conditions.

Of course, it hugs the bends well enough, but light steering and pliant suspension to cope with bumpy surfaces and easy manoeuvring mean it can't be a poor man's Range Rover Sport, ie a 4x4 car for hard road driving.

Not that too many would be rural-based buyers will worry about that; rather than the rather less rugged appeal of the Qashqai and

crossover wannabes, they want a car like the Forester to help them cope with the sort of hard winters we've had lately according to Kent's newest Subaru dealer, Canterbury Subaru.

Dealer principal, Kevin Ferrell, said: "The demographics for the rural east Kent area are right for the 4x4 dependability of the Subaru line-up, especially the rugged Outback and Forester models – some of the farmers around here will have fond memories of the little pick-up trucks that made the brand popular in the UK in the 80s.

"The CT post code area contains a lot of families who enjoy a rural lifestyle and country pursuits, go to horse shows and so on."

Prices are not the cheapest, but you get what you pay for in term of durability and the specifications are generous with our flagship test car, the £29,070 XS NavPlus, coming with a big electric sunroof, leather seats, sat nav – as the model name implies – and all the other toys expected.

First **GEAR**

**MOTORING NEWS**



## Peugeot deal to fuel sales

PEUGEOT has come up with a unique tonic for the spiralling cost of motoring. 'Just Add Fuel' is a new car ownership package which fixes all the major costs of running a car for three years – except the fuel. Customers buy or lease for a fixed monthly amount that includes comprehensive insurance, warranty, servicing, breakdown cover and road tax.



## There's more to MiTo range

ALFA Romeo has revised its MiTo sporting supermini range, with lower entry prices but higher standard specifications, plus a new road tax-busting sub 100g/km CO2 version. Prices for the car, named after Milan and Turin, now start at £12,250 for the entry level 1.4 8v Progression, to £17,955 for the 1.4 TB MultiAir 170bhp Quadrifoglio Verde.



## Lucky Seven's special edition

THE Dartford production plant for Caterham Cars is building a limited run of 25 Team Lotus Special Edition Caterham Sevens to celebrate the company's acquisition by Team Lotus. The cars mark the reunion of the Lotus race team with the historic Seven sports car, the rights to which were bought from Lotus founder Colin Chapman in 1973.



# More reasons to celebrate



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# Peugeot 508 means serious business

By Sam Davison

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

PEUGEOT could change the world of the company car driver with its new 508.

The sleek newcomer has style, quality and equipment to challenge the German Audi A4, BMW 3-Series and Mercedes-Benz C-Class premium trio and from a modest £18,150.

The proof though will be in residual values at the end of a 508's obligatory three years' hard labour as a company hack – a test that its 407 predecessor failed.

Though its gaping mouth grille pioneered the Peugeot corporate look of the Noughties, the 407's styling dated fast, the cabin lacked premium feel and the driving experience was so-so. Peugeot's model review probably noted that the French marque must do better than rely on the appeal of its excellent diesel engines.

Its well-trimmed and good-looking successor though,



should still be looking good enough to command the money at the end of company service providing there is enough desire from second-hand car buyers who, let's be honest, like German kit enough to keep used values high and company car lease deals relatively low as a consequence.

Game-changing plays available to the 508 (£18,150)

include styling that oozes class in both saloon and SW (estate) guise. The latter's downswept rear side windows disguise roof height over the rear cargo bay to create a sporty look tipped to secure as much as half of all 508 demand – underlining a surge in estate sales across the 'family car' sector.

The 508's lines are drawn from the eye-catching SR1

coupe concept, which Peugeot maintains will never be built but donated a blueprint for a new generation of cars.

If the 508's styling is a fresh departure, the high quality cabin celebrates a journey started with the current 308 and showing the gap between the outgoing 407 and the 508.

The ergonomics, fit and finish and quality of the plastics

and materials is striking on first encounter – a longer term test will say more – and the full length panoramic roof on the SW enhances the experience.

The final ace up the sleeve is the 508 driving experience: Peugeot has married the usual smooth ride with superior acoustic damping and far better dynamics across the range, with keen drivers able to opt for GT versions featuring a

modified front axle delivering more rigidity and 'point and shoot' capability for a relatively big car.

Which engine? Well, most will opt for the diesels: a 112bhp 1.6-litre, 140 and 163bhp 2.0-litre and 204bhp 2.2-litre.

The baby engine is available as an ultra-green e-HDI model with stop/start to save emissions and consumption in busy traffic, but the clutchless manual/auto EGC gearbox that further enables it to deliver a near road tax-exempt 109g/km of CO2 can feel awkward.

However, company car 'user choosers' will check it out for its tax-beating virtues and Peugeot is confident this will be the best seller and in mid-range SR trim.

But there are petrol alternatives: a 120bhp 1.6-litre with that EGC gearbox and a turbocharged 156bhp 1.6, with the latter likely to appeal to the private new car buyers expected to account for at least 20 per cent of 508 sales.

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Legacy ES Nav fuel consumption in mpg(l/100km): Urban from 24.1 (11.7) to 26.2 (10.8). Extra Urban from 41.5 (6.8) to 43.5 (6.5). Combined from 32.8 (8.6) to 34.9 (8.1). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 199 to 187 (g/km).



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Official fuel consumption for the SEAT range in mpg (litres per 100km): urban 26.4 (10.7) - 67.3 (4.2); extra urban 42.8 (6.6) - 91.1 (3.1); combined 34.9 (8.1) - 80.7 (3.5). CO2 emissions 190 - 92 g/km.

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* SEAT Leon 1.9 PD TDI Stylance	5-door Hatchback 32,000 miles, September 2008, Black Magic Metallic		£10,495
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* Renault Twingo 1.2 GT	3-door Hatchback, 11,800 miles, July 2008, Black Was: £6,995	Now: £6,395	Save £600!
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* Vauxhall Astra 1.8 Club	5-door Hatchback Automatic, 34,500 miles, May 2005, Star Silver Metallic		£4,995
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\*Based shown is for Satra Neo 1.6-1600 HPI (maximum) to new £8,495 including motor, gear which is up option at £295. On the new price (excludes VAT), delivery, transfer plate, 12 month road fund license and first registration fee. \*Finance is subject to credit check and is available with manufacturer's finance. 3 year or 60,000 miles. Terms and conditions apply.

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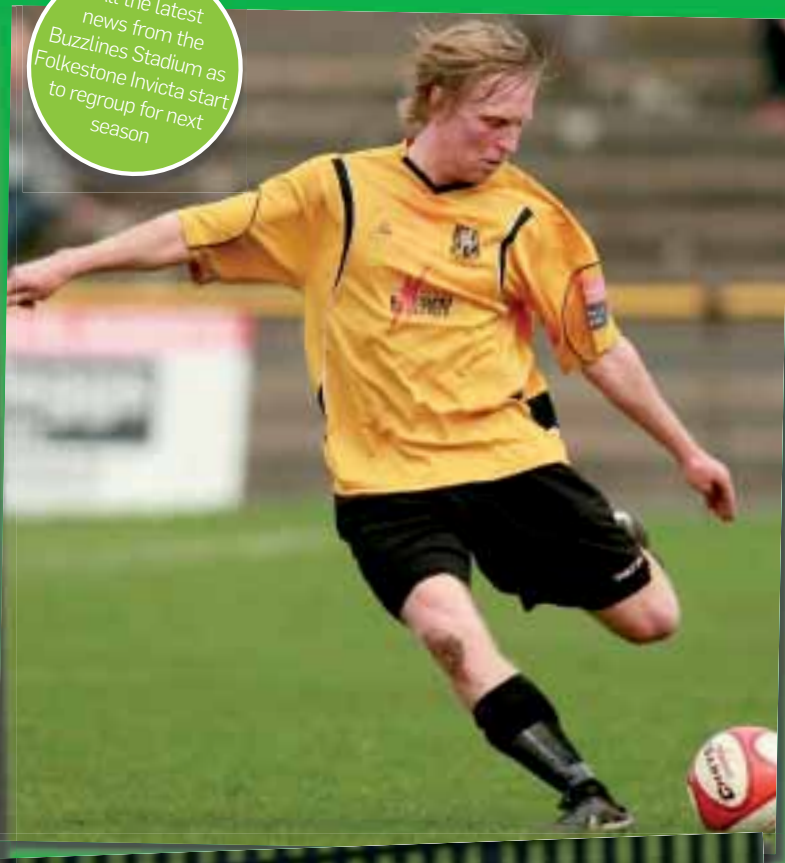
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Model shown is the Swift SZ2 3 door M/T available at £9,995\* on the road (metallic paint at £399).

Swift range official fuel consumption figures in mpg (L/100km): urban from 41.5 (6.8) to 46.3 (6.1), extra urban from 57.6 (4.9) to 64.2 (4.4), combined from 50.4 (5.6) to 56.5 (5.0). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 129g/km to 116g/km.



Dover Athletic manager Martin Hayes on his decision to release four players, including Lewwis Spence



All the latest news from the Buzzlines Stadium as Folkestone Invicta start to regroup for next season



A full round-up from the opening weekend of the Kent Cricket League, where Sandwich Town began with a defeat



Report as Hythe Town missed out on the league and cup double with defeat in the Premier Division Cup final

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